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the 1990s, the number of people in the world who are under 15 years of age is expected to increase from 1.1 billion to 1.5 billion.

As the world's population grows, the demand for food and other resources will increase. The world's population is expected to reach 9 billion by the year 2050. This means that there will be 9 billion people competing for the same resources that we have today. The world's population is expected to reach 10 billion by the year 2100. This means that there will be 10 billion people competing for the same resources that we have today.

The world's population is expected to reach 11 billion by the year 2150. This means that there will be 11 billion people competing for the same resources that we have today. The world's population is expected to reach 12 billion by the year 2200. This means that there will be 12 billion people competing for the same resources that we have today. The world's population is expected to reach 13 billion by the year 2250. This means that there will be 13 billion people competing for the same resources that we have today.

The world's population is expected to reach 14 billion by the year 2300. This means that there will be 14 billion people competing for the same resources that we have today. The world's population is expected to reach 15 billion by the year 2350. This means that there will be 15 billion people competing for the same resources that we have today.

The world's population is expected to reach 16 billion by the year 2400. This means that there will be 16 billion people competing for the same resources that we have today. The world's population is expected to reach 17 billion by the year 2450. This means that there will be 17 billion people competing for the same resources that we have today.

The world's population is expected to reach 18 billion by the year 2500. This means that there will be 18 billion people competing for the same resources that we have today. The world's population is expected to reach 19 billion by the year 2550. This means that there will be 19 billion people competing for the same resources that we have today.

The world's population is expected to reach 20 billion by the year 2600. This means that there will be 20 billion people competing for the same resources that we have today. The world's population is expected to reach 21 billion by the year 2650. This means that there will be 21 billion people competing for the same resources that we have today.

The world's population is expected to reach 22 billion by the year 2700. This means that there will be 22 billion people competing for the same resources that we have today. The world's population is expected to reach 23 billion by the year 2750. This means that there will be 23 billion people competing for the same resources that we have today.

The world's population is expected to reach 24 billion by the year 2800. This means that there will be 24 billion people competing for the same resources that we have today. The world's population is expected to reach 25 billion by the year 2850. This means that there will be 25 billion people competing for the same resources that we have today.

The world's population is expected to reach 26 billion by the year 2900. This means that there will be 26 billion people competing for the same resources that we have today. The world's population is expected to reach 27 billion by the year 2950. This means that there will be 27 billion people competing for the same resources that we have today.

The world's population is expected to reach 28 billion by the year 3000. This means that there will be 28 billion people competing for the same resources that we have today. The world's population is expected to reach 29 billion by the year 3050. This means that there will be 29 billion people competing for the same resources that we have today.





256-

CARA ROMA.

BY

MISS GRANT,

AUTHOR OF "THE SUN-MAID," "PRINCE HUGO," "ARTISTE," "MY HEART'S IN
THE HIGHLANDS," ETC.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

"La Simpatia è un ponte d'oro."

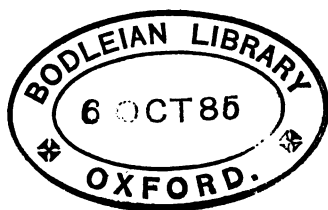
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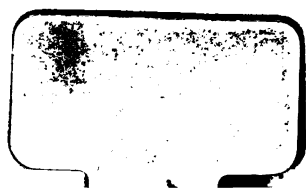
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thoughts were rushing in; while memories, too, of long-neglected themes, came tossing upon the suddenly disturbed current of the stream of his mental life.

They brought him joy that was intense and keen.

Yesterday, he thought he had 'forgotten everything'—was a man of years—sedate—a trifle dry and chill. To-day, he was a boy, a classic student, a dreamer—poetic, ardent, adoring, a lover again!

Or so, it seemed to him! For of all these things, Adrian Dillon was conscious, sensibly and experimentally conscious, as he leant resting upon the stone edge of Bernini's Fontana della Barcaccia in the Piazza di Spagna at Rome.

He was tired, for he had travelled more than sixty hours without halt or slumber; and with the eager enthusiasm of that suddenly-reawakened life of his, he had trodden the hot causeway of the old selci-paved streets, from the Stazione della Ferrovia, by the Terme di Diocleziano, passed the Acqua

Felice, along the Via Venti-Settembre to the Quirinal ; then right round the Monte Cavallo, and away across by the Capitolium Vetus—to the Forum Trajano, and towards the Campidoglio already—since he had arrived in the Eternal City that morning !

And again, and again, and again, since the sun rose on that bright February day, he had quaffed deep, passionate draughts of the strong mental life of Rome ; of association, of suggestion, of poetry, of history, of art, and as he rested here now a moment, and paused to decide in which new path to turn his eager steps he realized, that since last Saturday, when in a foggy day-break he had crossed the murky Thames, he had become a new man, or once again, had met and greeted eagerly an old buoyant self whom he had thought—had died !

The Piazza di Spagna was brilliant this morning. The blue veil stretching across the housetops, was radiant, transparent, tremulous, with heat and light ; the shadows cut the white pavements in clear, dark lines. The

sunshine was not fierce yet, with the fire-blast of the breath of summer Rome; but it was sweet and sparkling; it was warm, and lustrous, and glad. It danced over the scene full of life, and laden with its happy burden of spring, and carnival, of the verdure and soft scent of flowers.

And even the old dark houses of the Piazza, shone radiant with their patches of gay colour in the morning light:

A new coat of paint, of bright and divers hue, adorned the tall, grim facing of the dark house at the right-hand corner where Adonais had sighed his heart in bitterness away. A light striped awning and a flower-laden balcony concealed the lattice from which Shelley had gazed. And a swinging signboard marked the entrance to the Palazzo opposite where Monti had dwelt awhile. In fact, all that describes the Piazza di Spagna, was instinct this morning with everything, which to fancy, memory, or imagination is—as the breath of life.

And the every-day world of modern Rome

was active, eager, and picturesque as well :—

There were troops of gay idlers by the shop windows, clustering beneath the striped and snowy awnings at Piale's library, before Spithöver's photographs, Vazzari's bonbons, Asorpi's bric-à-brac, Vespignani's ivories, Olivier's vellum bindings from the Abruzzi, or Monaldini's and Calisti's English books. Strangers and passing sojourners most of these, a ready prey for Italian enterprise, all eager in the search for good specimens of Intagli and Impronti sulphur casts, for Tarsia work, for Roman pearls, for every kind of copy, of every kind of thing, from the antique of Greece, Etruria, or Rome. Paintings, bronzes, marbles, gems, laces, mosaics, manuscripts, cameos, and jewellery—in which Pierret of this Piazza rivalled Castellani's (with the Duc di Sermoneta's beautiful designs)—original and imitations, every sort of thing, was hunted—and found—and collected eagerly, by the troops of gay idlers, who jostled and chased each other in the

Piazza di Spagna this morning, through the sun and shade.

And Adrian Dillon watched them all, as he leant on Bernini's fountain, and as the water danced high above his head, and shone and sparkled in countless diamond rays.

There were peasants as usual, in quaint costumes of the Campagna, resting in placid idleness on the steps of the Spanish stairs; waiting till perchance 'some man should hire them,' as models for an artist's picture when the day wore on. Brown-faced beggars slept at the base of the tall column, from the Campo Marzo, shadowed by Moses or Ezekiel as the case might be, and the sun shone down upon them, with that wealth of unfading glory, which seems to make life at Rome, with its fountains, its flowers, its palazzos and arches, its columns, and its Tiber stream, even to its brown-faced and often hungry beggars, a thing of beauty and of deathless joy.

Adrian Dillon had not come to Rome because of the joy of life to be found there.

He had not thought of this nor expected it in any way. He had not come because of the golden sunsets that glow nightly across the glorious crimson horizon beyond St. Peter's dome. Nor for the music of the Pifferari that fills the sunlit days and the moonlit evenings at every street corner all the Carnival through. Not with one thought of any, of the thousand and one things, that form the charm, strong and utterly irresistible which seizes the whole spirit in the poetry of Rome.

His coming had been chiefly because of the Rosetta Stone in the British Museum.

The celebrated Rosetta Stone! It had been for years his chief interest in life, with its triple inscriptions in hieroglyphics, Demotic, and Greek. It had led him on to the colossal fist from Memphis, and by way of the cat-headed goddess Sekhet to the subject of obelisks ; and he had realised, that in the limited array of these original Egyptians, to be studied in Europe, at least ten of them were to be found at Rome. And this had

brought him,—this had been the one conscious impulse which had carried him along, and now, he had been scarcely two hours at Rome, and he had forgotten it.

Leaning upon the edge of Bernini's fountain, with the water-plash falling sweetly on his ear, with groups of brown beggars and picturesque flower girls, and lazy artist models crowding round him; with a Roman sky above his head and Italian sunshine falling on his tall figure and bronzed brown head, with the mid-day chimes filling the tremulous hot air, and all Rome, above—beyond and around him, he looked not unworthy of the influences of the scene.

There was nothing picturesque about his aspect certainly, but there was the simple, well-bred grace and perfect ease of that type of Englishman to which he belonged. His appearance, in every detail of dress, of gesture or of attitude was absolutely unstudied, but as absolutely faultless of its kind. He was slight; his cheek was a little worn and pale; a brown moustache drooped low over

his lips, marking the outline of a firm-cut chin. The moustache and close straight hair had a touch of red in their hue, like bronze with the sun on it; and his eyes had the steel-blue fire of all the English eyes that go with that bronze-brown hair, and with that thin cheek, of pale tone in times of repose and coolness, that can flush with such a living glow under excitement, or the thrill of passion of any kind.

There was the affectation of indolence so dear to many men, in the attitude with which he leant in repose; the indolence that could be flung aside under the fire of impulse like a mantle before the sun; and if he did not work, and if he dreamt away his years over the Rosetta Stone and the Cat-headed Goddess, in unfruitful idleness, it was not because the nervous, slim, well-shaped hand that lay on the marble fountain-edge, could not grasp at will, or do. It was all most evidently a superstructure upon his real character, as unnatural to him, as the would-be cynicism which curled beneath his long moustache, on

lips, which were formed to tremble with eager passion, and to part with the sweet radiance of a love-lit smile.

They were parting now, he was softly smiling, and the steel-blue eyes had a curious, deep, fervent glow. For the witchery of all Rome was upon him. The magic of that living light and pulsing, vibrating air had thrilled his very soul. And besides and beyond this, an old, sweet memory was firing his heart with new, strong vitality.

The angel of life who had swooped down on him all suddenly, after seeming to have deserted him for years, had now plucked the torch from out the hand of the love-god, and was touching him with the memory of one old, smouldering fire. A fire that was lighting up, either revived or all anew, as he gazed across the Piazza di Spagna, and as he contemplated,—what quite obliterated the recollection of the obelisks and all thought of the Rosetta Stone :—

Between him and the foot of the great marble stairs that led up to the Trinità dei

Monti, a little flower-cart had suddenly stopped.

It was a blaze of glorious colour in the sunlight; a mass of great crimson lilies, towering amid clusters of fresh spring green; a bank of violets and pansies, and pale, sweet, yellow primroses piled up in front, and a hedge of Roman hyacinths rearing their graceful white and lilac heads fringed with maiden-hair fern—a fine piece of colour, backed by the Spanish steps—and yet only a peasant's flower-cart from the Campagna, drawn by a rough, brown donkey, with red and purple tassels tossing about his ears, and surrounded by a group of flower-sellers of every possible age.

An old woman, with russet petticoat and crimson kerchief and wizened face, as imposing in aspect and dramatic in gesture as the witch Canidia may have been, who made love-philtres in the fields by the ancient Cemetery in the days when Horace sung; a boy with a sun-tanned, chestnut skin, and those dark, wistful eyes that look at us from

out the canvas of Murillo, with bare neck and brown, uncovered feet, with loose hanging shirt and generally-ragged raiment, which produced a marvellous effect of colour in its accidental combinations of dull and faded blue, of crimson and grey and brown. A little child was perched upon the cart's shaft, a child with golden-brown wavy curls, such as Italian children have often—for they are not all dark and black, as their painters well knew—a lovely child with large eyes glistening brightly, with a brown cheek, soft with the bloom of a sun-ripened peach, with hands full of lilies, and with tiny, ivory teeth, gleaming in a radiantly seductive smile.

And as there were several of these family groups with flower-carts and donkeys, scattered up and down the Corso and round the Piazza this morning, it was probably this child, lovely as a Bambino of Raphael, who had caught the glance and arrested the footsteps of *one* of those English wanderers, coming idly down the Spanish steps.

Adrian Dillon's gaze turned eagerly upon

the group, and kindling with that fervent glow of strange, unwonted feeling, was not fixed on the picturesque flower-sellers, with all their varieties of tints and artistic hues. He was no artist, and had no sketch-book in his pocket to pull out hastily, that the group might be noted there. He was only a self-pleasing *connoisseur* of manythings; a dreamy, rather morose cogitator over crooked inscriptions of much "ancient and forgotten lore," and a man who had cast the soft things, and the fair things, and all the lovely and loveable things of life far, far behind him, and had thought *that* dead for him, which was now strongly, irresistibly thrilling him with sweet and magnetic power.

SHE, was standing close against the flower-cart, the crimson lilies rearing their graceful heads beyond her bending shoulder. She was not twenty yards away. She had not observed Adrian, so he, unrestrained and unnoticed, could observe her—the delicate, fair face; the graceful young form; the eager, impetuous gesture; the beautiful,

frank, bright glance;—even the full, soft tones reached him as, in Italian, she spoke caressingly to the little child.

Then her hands too, were full of lilies and ferns and white hyacinths, and the brown faces round her, all lit up with glances and smiles as radiant as the sparkle of their Roman fountains, as she covered the boy's brown, open palm with coin—small bronze centimes and soldi—so little went with them so far!

“Bene, benissimo, signorina.”

She was just the sort of “Principessa Inglese” they liked to find on those fine mornings of the carnival at the Spanish steps.

She turned, and then paused, her hands full of lilies, her eyes bright with pleasure and soft with admiration as they lingered an instant upon the pretty children of the Campagna—and then she looked suddenly round.

Adrian Dillon had sprung upright. He stood near her. Her gaze wandering round

the Piazza, as if missing some one, at length turned his way. Their eyes met—his, eager, fervent, kindling with the light of a recognition, with a joy that was thrilling to his very heart; and hers, cool, calm, a little surprised, then at last kindling, too, with indignation, as they lingered on him for one instant of wonder, and then turned coldly away.

She was very beautiful, and she looked cool and stately; and as she turned away, her creamy-hued dress swept the pavement at his feet with a majestic movement, though she was so fair and young, and though the blue eyes that had turned for that one moment upon him were soft and lovely as the dew-washed violets among the hyacinths in her hands.

She was beautiful, but it was not this that so affected him. Adrian Dillon was not '*sensible*' to any remarkable degree; indeed, the very diametrically opposite had been his favourite *pose* for years. And yet, that cold, indignant glance quivered over the

fibres of his being, like a flash of lightning on the electric cord.

It was the magic of a recognition—not of her, but of a living memory, hidden beyond that curtain which he had dropped before the portal of his heart.

A moment—and as she turned with a slight uneasiness of glance, her little anxiety was ended—she was not alone.

A graceful, well-dressed woman, taller than herself, her likeness, yet evidently double her age, came forward with a rapid step from out the doorway of the small gold-worker's shop at the corner of the great Scala, and was by her side.

"Oh, Car! what lovely flowers! And in February, too! Oh, Roma, come sei bellissima! It is really wonderful! Life is beautiful, intense, entrancing all day long! Look! while you bought your lilies I have found such a lovely little ivory crucifix, surely a real Cellini design—do look!"

The young girl, Car, as the other had called her, turned. She bent to scrutinize

the new treasure. She smiled into the darker eyes, that in expression were so like her own, and she laughed, a low, happy laugh, that echoed the pleasure and satisfaction of her mother's words. But as yet she had said nothing in answer; when Adrian came forward and stood close.

99 For one instant he was unnoticed by their side, then,—

“Vere,” he murmured, “is it really, really you?”

The mother looked quickly round, and a moment of hesitation clouded her face; then a flush of warm colour mounted slowly and at first doubtfully to her cool cheek, until at last an exclamation broke from her, and a wave of wondering feeling rushed over every quivering feature of her countenance, and her fine eyes glistened with tears.

“Adrian—you, here?”

Her hand seemed unconsciously to clasp her daughter's for one instant, and the crucifix of Cellini remained in the girl's hold.

And then at last, Adrian Dillon had her

two hands in his eager clasp, and his head was bending low above them, until both were pressed close to his lips.

She laughed a little then, for she would cover her agitation, which was not a common thing for her to show.

"Have you been so long in Italy, then," she said, "that you have learnt all these pretty Italian ways?"

"I came to Italy only to-day," he answered. "May not even an Englishman be betrayed sometimes into a feeling, or even the exhibition of the same? Ah, Vere, or Lady Daring, as I ought perhaps to say, this is a city of wonders, but of all its wonders the most unexpected is this meeting with so old a friend."

It had taken them but that instant—they had both recovered their composure now.

"An old friend indeed, and a kinsman, Adrian Dillon. Well, years have passed, but you are a cousin always, and I think it must be 'Adrian' still."

"For old sake's sake," he murmured.

"For *her* sake," she answered, and once more she gave him gently her hand.

He held it, but did not lift it to his lips again. He had raised his head, his glance had brightened at her last word. He was looking wonderingly, wistfully round, until his eyes rested once again, with that electric flash in them, upon Car, where she stood, a little drawn back now from her mother's side, with her great bunch of scarlet lilies in one hand, and Cellini's ivory crucifix in the other.

"Ah! is it not wonderful," her mother said, "the likeness? Is it not her—her very self again? And she is Cecilia also—but for her I have added Cara, and I call her Car—I could not bear more than the echo in my heart's thought of her, the hushed and softened echo of that dear, lost name. Car," she added, turning quietly to her daughter, "this is Adrian Dillon, of whom I told you only yesterday as we sat in the woods of the Borghese, and whom I have not seen since I went to India, when your father took the

government of the Eastern Provinces, twenty years ago."

The girl turned now towards him, the sweet blue eyes no longer cold. They were full of kindness, and opened wide, with a little wondering curiosity, and critical examination as well.

For what her mother had told her of Adrian Dillon had roused all her ready sensibilities, all her eager, newly awakened interest for heart-suffering of every kind.

She had been told a tale of romance amid the woods of the Borghese yesterday, at the soft sunset hour, and here—all suddenly—he was—he, who had so loved and suffered, and remained so true.

Their hands touched then, their eyes met, and the magnetism of a ready sympathy thrilled both their hearts.

Her heart, that was merely fluttering softly, as a tender, half-fledged bird, stirred by the first instinct of restlessness, the first quickening sense of power, may flutter softly in the sheltered, hidden depths of its downy

nest; and his heart, that was beating with strength and fervour, because of all the keen excitement which had possessed him since the early morning, and because she, standing there and looking up into his eyes with clear, starlike gaze, all tranquil and unconscious, her soft hand now meeting his with a touch so light and cool, she was as the centre of his entire life to him, a presence at which his past met all his future, and *love* sprang up from the ruins of that which had been—love eager, and strong, and new.

And that was how they met in the Piazza di Spagna. And so it was that the life-angel swooped down upon Adrian Dillon once more, with a rush in his wings, soft and swift as the doves of Venus that were floating round him in the blue air that morning, dipping their plumes in Bernini's fount. And so it was, too, that the love-god, who is never far absent from the track of the fiery life-herald, nor yet from the dark-winged spirit of mortality that hovers low and often

over Rome—the bright love-god came suddenly to him as well, returning, though driven once so roughly away, blowing up his torch anew, and firing Adrian's heart, and sending him on rejoicing, because of that glow and that thrill of a strange gladness within him, as he trod for six happy days, the sunlit pavements of Rome !

“ And you are a Roman born, and have a Roman name, and you come here for the first time this morning ? ”

They had turned, and were walking side by side, the three together, across the sunny Piazza—Adrian between mother and daughter now.

They walked slowly, and he looked downwards on the selci causeway as he went, his eyes half-closed, as if the lids were forcibly lowered, to hide the keen strength of feeling which moved him still. And Lady Daring looking up at him, her dark eyes glistening with soft emotion, too, but her head raised and thrown slightly back with a certain dignity of gesture which became her.

Control was not natural to Vere Daring, but it had been always necessary to her. She was a woman who felt more at most times than life had allowed her to show. For she had occupied, during those bygone years since Adrian Dillon had known her, positions in life in which dignity had commanded control ; and although she possessed that charm of manner which never fails to win, the power of implying feeling stronger than her words, still she had been obliged, by all the circumstances of her surroundings, to express every sort of sentiment, sympathetic, understanding, or appreciative, with due reserve. The world had always closely encircled her—a critical and often a censorious world.

So there had come to her assistance already now, habit, that was stronger than impulse. She was feeling intensely, but her words were light and cool.

He accepted the control which she seemed powerfully to communicate, and he answered as lightly as she had spoken ; while Car's

blue eyes turned with wonder and curious interest from her mother's countenance to his.

Was it thus that people met, then, in the world of conventionalities to which she had just come?—met, when the whole of a life's romance lay in the retrospect between them? Just one flash of feeling, one glance of fervour, a few murmured words, one lingering hand-clasp for old memory's sake, and then they turn and saunter easily together, and toss light, frothy words, such as everybody was saying all round and about them, in just the same heedless way! Was this the reality of romance?

“A Roman born, and with a Roman name; yes, true, though inconceivable,” he was saying. “I have not been here since I was driven out of the Porto del Popolo towards Civita Vecchia when I was two years old. My dear father—what a fancy it was to call me by such a name!”

“I think I like the name,” said Lady Daring.

“Do you? It seems very absurd! My

father's name was George—George, the son of John—very English, and very good. But here he was, at that time, and the old Emperor, I suppose, haunted him. For he spent hours out at the Tivoli Villa, they told me, every day ; and one of my most familiar recollections of him is that favourite injunction of his : ‘ Never believe anybody who says that the Venus of the Uffizi Tribune came from the Portico of Octavia.’ For, you know, he had written folios to prove the very niche that had been her resting-place at that villa of Adrian's through fourteen hundred years of beauty sleep.”

“ But why have you never come ? ”

“ I do not know. I was coming once, you know, for the winter ; it was all settled, I think I remember, was it not ? ” He paused, and his drooping eyelids were raised for an instant, and his eyes flashed quickly into hers. “ I suppose that was why I never came. I have been to Egypt twice, and to several other places, but never here. I have seen Athens from the Acropolis, but I have

never seen the sun set from the Capitol on Rome."

"You must see it now," she answered.

"Yes, perhaps yes. But I shall not have much time. I have only come to Rome for a week."

"Oh, Adrian, how like you!" and Lady Daring laughed softly, with a break of sudden emotion in her voice. "Rome in a week!"

"Yes, I lived my life out," he answered, "in three."

"But why? What has brought you? What takes you away?"

"I came, simply running in my groove," he said. "It ran me here. I am writing a thing on the correspondence between the demotic writing on that stone in the London Museum and the sacred inscriptions in hieroglyphics on the obelisks here; so I have had to come and see the obelisks. But I must get back at once."

"Will the stone take wings and disappear?" she said.

"No, but a thing has to be finished," he answered indifferently; "and as soon as I have copied the inscriptions that I want, I must go. But—"

And he paused again, and he lifted his eyes and looked round; a restless sigh fluttered on his lips before he spoke again. He looked up at the blue veil of the bright sky, round upon the gay, flower-decked Piazza, at the pearl-winged doves dipping in the cool fountain, and then he met her dark, sparkling eyes again.

Vere Daring smiled.

"But now—"

"Well, it is this," he said; "a man gets very tired of a groove."

They had stopped in their slow transit of the Piazza, and faced one another for a moment. Now Lady Daring turned and went on again.

"I hate a groove," she answered emphatically. "Tell me, Adrian, have obelisks and inscriptions all these years been yours?"

"Pretty well," he answered.

"How extraordinary!"

"Everything seems extraordinary to any of us," he replied, "that makes up the interest of our neighbour's life. I have ceased to wonder."

"And I am wondering, wondering over everything, Adrian, still."

He laughed with a little cynical bitterness, and his eyes turned from her suddenly, and sought Car's face.

There was wonder there—much wonder—the critical, grave, wistful wonder with which a child looks out on life. He smiled, a soft, bright smile quivering on his lips for a moment, as his gaze rested on hers.

"I have ceased to wonder long ago," he added. "I sat down quietly before the sphinx of my existence, Vere, and awaited the solving of the enigma in the evolution of time. Yes, and I sometimes thought it would come, too; and so I kept up my heart."

"You were not always sad, then?" said Car suddenly, with that look of wistful scru-

tiny fixed upon him still. "Not always sad?" she repeated, after an instant, for that romance of the Borghese Gardens was with her still.

"No," he said, "the Rosetta Stone is not a sad subject, and I seldom contemplated anything much beyond. But now I am awakened, and in consequence I also am wondering—so, Lady Daring, will you tell me *your* part in the combinations of destiny which has brought us all together here? When did you come to Rome?"

"We have been here three months—at least, Car and I have. I came home by Venice, and she met me there. Frederick came by Brindisi and Ancona about a fortnight ago."

"Ah! Sir Frederick is here?"

"Yes, he has a six months' leave; he was 'done' for the time; things have been difficult in the Eastern Provinces lately, and his work has been hard. He is enjoying himself now in complete rest, as he tells us; but

that means what would imply herculean enterprise to me. He is a little in your line—ruins, obelisks, pyramids—only he sketches them instead of copying their inscriptions, as you seem to do. He is out now in some direction, doubtless; he is happy with pencil and sketch-book from dawn to night. Ah! how pleased Frederick will be to see you, Adrian, again.”

They had reached the west corner of the Piazza, and once more they all paused.

“Such a pleasant meeting,” Lady Daring continued again. “As if home, with all its old, sweet memories, was travelling out to meet us on our way. Making me feel so young again once more, Adrian, just as I was beginning to be sedate and middle-aged, to bear myself as Car’s mother and her chaperone must do. It seems so strange—we are such new acquaintances,” she added with a little laugh, and a cloud of quick feeling dimming the brightness of her glance for a moment, as she turned towards the girl. “Perhaps you do not realize, Adrian, that

'this daughter of mine and I, have not met, until this Roman winter, for more than ten long years.'

They looked as if they so entirely belonged to each other, that the thing was indeed difficult to believe.

"*Malgré tout*," said Car softly, "I do not think we were ever really apart."

"We are all together, for once, at all events, now—at last, at long, long last," Lady Daring went on. "And Rome, Adrian, your native Rome, is a pleasant ground for meeting. You must be with us constantly—for the time—short or long, that you may be here. This is our house; we have an apartment here. I believe it was the house of Mendelssohn while he dwelt at Rome, and Car adores it accordingly. Ah! you shall hear her play, and that allusion, *en passant*, will be made clear to you. But will you find your way upstairs, will you come this afternoon, will you come this evening, will you come always—we will make you welcome always, we will teach you to love your Rome."

“Will *you* come to the Phocas Column?” he answered, covering once again his emotion arising at her words under an effort at a return to his familiar groove and shell.

“We will go to all the columns and obelisks of the eternal city, if you please,” she said, answering his tone; “and you shall translate all their inscriptions for us. But Rome has other things than obelisks, Adrian, and we shall enjoy it all afresh again in showing it to you. Where are you living, by-the-bye?”

“My servant carried off my possessions to an hotel which is called the Paris, I believe—it is just here, at the Piazza corner. I have a view high up, over the Pincian Hill.”

“Oh, that is charming—you are not a stone’s throw from us; and if Frederick returns to luncheon, I will send him to look you up this very afternoon. A rivederla, cugino mio—see, we must not linger another minute or Car’s lilies will every one of them die.”

CHAPTER II.

CECILIA OF THE BORGHESI.

THE romantic story, which had been told to Cecilia-Cara of Adrian Dillon amid the woods of Borghese in the soft sunset hour only of the day before, had been a tale of many years ago. And Lady Daring had told it, because in the happy ease of intercourse to which she drifted quickly with this daughter just restored to her, she discovered a fascination, to which she yielded her deeper self with a freedom as charming as it was unusual to her.

Lady Daring valued the deeper feelings of humanity, all the keen sensibilities of which she was conscious within herself, as among

those hidden treasures of life which might indeed make its experience one long and exquisite enjoyment, were there not other and external things to which this purely personal luxury of delicate sentiments and their indulgence must be immolated without mercy.

She was capable of fine feeling on every kind of subject, very sensitive to impressions, and alive to the effects of beauty, in music, in character, in person, in scenery, in art; but she was also most keenly alive to the dazzling influence of distinction, of brilliant achievement, and of worldly success. And all these last had been hers, during those bygone twenty years, in which she had shared the high place and social dominion of her husband, whose life had been brilliant in its course.

Vere Daring had been formed in the mould of twenty years of predominance, in all things social, over every one within her reach, and she valued all that outward part which had grown like the casement of a second nature over what had once been her.

She had been proud throughout her eastern life, and, while always brilliant, somewhat chilling in that position which she filled. She was prouder for her husband than he ever was for himself; and though he had often been forced to leave her solitary, and though, when she had married him, she was very young, she had guarded the dignity of his name with an exclusive and reticent denial of any fancies of her own, which had made her life often one of seclusion.

People had lived far from her, during these years, few coming near enough to touch even the outer rim of her inner life. Few indeed had been worthy among the many encircling her, and few had had any power to touch her sensibilities at all—and to those few, she had denied all opportunity.

Instantly, when they met again, she knew that Car's quick and poetic instincts could reach and touch her, and that her child's delicate nature was sympathetic to hers.

Vere Daring had never indulged herself in that far east with any dreams or vivid antici-

pations of that meeting with her daughter, and she had not realized what it would be. She had thought of her simply as 'the child' whom she had sent home for safety and education ten years ago, and children had never been much in her line.

But, when there met her at Venice, this girl, trembling on the fringe of womanhood, with the light of her own youth in her blue, dreamy eyes, and with the form and likeness of the Cecilia, that had been, the sister of that bygone youth, so like her in every feature, in every gesture, in every winsome way—then she knew that Car touched her as few things for many years had done. And that post of enterprise to which she often mentally appointed herself, as the convoy of her child through the rocks of her social life towards a harbour at least as worthy as the one in which she herself had anchored—that post lost its significance sometimes, as she let herself float so sweetly away on the stream of this soft companionship, which brought so much to her that she had never looked for,

and aroused so many feelings of which she had little dreamt. She was in fact so young herself still, or her youth, at least, had gone so short a distance away, that the view lay still, clear right across it to the very dawn, and the light was on every point vivid and strong. And so, it was very pleasant, to tread again the tangled path of sweet romance and soft love-mystery—from which she herself had only just strayed away.

On the girl's side also this curious experience has been most fascinating, and her brilliant and changeful mother was to her an acquaintance, delightful as she was new.

Only, while Lady Daring, full of sweet surprise at the intense enjoyment which sprang up like a fresh-water spring from the depths of her own best nature in this new-found companionship, yielded herself without question, without criticism, and with that unwonted freedom which was so pleasant, to all the charm which she discovered in her child,—Car felt often in a maze. Because this influence, that was so strong and fascinat-

ing, was also variable and contradictory; and because it failed to harmonize with many thoughts and feelings that were already vigorously developed within herself.

In fact, Lady Daring's views on soft subjects of sentiment were not at all times the same. Tender, and intensely sympathetic often, in her eager appreciation of love in all its deepest phases, of life strung at its loftiest pitch, there were times also when ideal views of all such things fell quite away from her, and she would smile with soft, cynical scorn, and push aside all idea that life could be lived out, or 'played out,' as she sometimes called it, on such principles as these.

One such softly cynical time had overtaken her amidst their first happy intercourse at Venice; and had roused Car, even in those early days, from her dreamland of sweet mystery to some curious reflections and to some surprise.

A circumstance befell, which had scattered for the time being all the soft sentiment and unpractical ideality from Lady Daring's

active mind, and disclosed an unexpected vision of her most *unromantic* self.

It was only a meeting. The son of an Indian friend, of a late Governor-General, at whose house the Darings had been always 'at home,' arrived suddenly at Venice. It was young Lord Farnham. He was travelling with the escort of a clever tutor, for his father—Lady Daring's friend of Indian days—was dead. The boy had succeeded to his peerage, though not yet of age. In a few months he would be, however, and in the meantime he found himself quite of years for the privilege of falling in love.

Lady Daring gave him dextrous assistance, and directed ably the quick disposal of his heart; and Car woke up from dreaming, to realize that her charming mother, whose soft voice and tender, mystical talk on many thrilling themes had bewitched her enthusiasm, and enchained her love, was now requesting her, with all coolness, to accept the privileges of a destiny in which she herself saw nothing that was ideal; to give her

hand where her heart had never gone, and to promise to marry Lord Farnham without any question, and on the strength of an acquaintance that was slight.

Car hesitated, and wondered almost silently. Her amazement was so great that she was not at once ready with words, —and Lady Daring decided not to wait for them.

“Why should the child be troubled?” she thought to herself. “What can she know? Why agitate the tranquil dreaminess which was her greatest charm?”

Lord Farnham should be answered, but not necessarily by Car at all. She herself answered him, and left a pleasant state of uncertainty behind her in the young man’s mind (when she departed suddenly from Venice), by which, he remained doubtful, if he were engaged or not, but conscious clearly only of one thing, that Venice was a wilderness, a dreary network rather, of blank, quite uninteresting canals, which two days ago, while they floated in their gondolas

together, had been a paradise of poetry and delight.

Lord Farnham left Venice when they did, and went on to Naples, waiting eagerly the time when Lady Daring should give him *rendezvous* at Rome.

Meanwhile, she took her child to Florence, where they spent together many sunny days—sunlit with soft happiness, and full of deep and ineffable enjoyment—as they threaded their way together, through all the wonder and fascination of that lovely city. And from thence they had hurried quickly, on the news that Sir Frederick was coming back to them for a Roman winter, and that he hoped to find them settled in a home there, where he might join them before the cold set in.

They were ready for him in the Piazza di Spagna before November was over, and for the last three months the little family of wanderers had been very happy together. For, during this Roman time, Lady Daring allowed herself to resume all that softened *pose* again, in which she found

indeed for her own self so much sweetness and charm. Lord Farnham was safe; she thought of him often with complacency, for she heard from him sometimes, and she thought he was safe. And meanwhile, that she had done so well, as she felt, on this her first excursion in maternal enterprise, she might yield herself once again to the charm which this wayward, dreaming girl of hers had for her so continually; might please herself by softly playing on the sweet and mobile nature, and in being with her daughter, often the youngest, the brightest, sometimes the most romantic of the two.

The child's enthusiasm so delighted her, it was always charming to fan it into life. The young fancy sparkled so prettily sometimes in answer to her own excursions into sentiment, or fanciful thought. And then Car's one irresistible power—her lovely gift of music—remained always for her mother's impressionable though guarded nature an unfailing delight. Over music, over poetry, over Rome and all its glories, she loved to be

romantic with Car, waiting always the correct moment for the prosaic.

It was in one of these occasional moods of intense softness that they had sat together, having dismissed their carriage, in the glades of the Borghese Woods only yesterday afternoon. And Lady Daring had been for the moment curiously *sensible* to the surroundings, the sympathetic spring surroundings of the Roman atmosphere and sky; and as she had met the gaze of her daughter's blue, dreaming eyes, full of reflections from her own youth, and yet more from a youth of another who was gone, she was betrayed into reminiscence; and she told of twenty years ago, when her father had been home from his foreign embassy, and they had had a house through all the lovely summer by the river-side; near Formosa it was, just where the woody bend of the stream is so beautiful at eventide.

How, one hot July night—it was after dinner, as she could recollect—she and her one sister, Cecilia, had been lingering toge-

ther by the water's edge ; and how the swish of long oars had come to them up the river, and from beneath the low, hanging trees, and an outrigger shot up towards the sloping lawn close by their feet ; and their cousin, Adrian Keith Dillon, stood up, tall and strong, in the evening light, as the boat touched the shore ;—he had sprung from it lightly to the grass. And he had stayed, and his friend with him, and such sunny days had been.

Only one summer moon, and all the tale was told ! She herself had liked the friend—he, as well as Adrian, was young and eager, full of sentiment, and full of classic lore, which they brought floating down the river from their college life. But hers had been a light, merely a pleasant liking, that had gilded sweetly those summer days. Already her eager, ambitious mind was full of other things, and life must always have had action and purpose for her, as well as poetry and romance.

But those others—how they had loved !—Adrian and sweet, proud Cecilia, who had

never bent her heart or head before. How they loved, and what bliss was theirs on lawn and river through all those summer days ! Till their moon waned, their golden summer moon, and then it seemed all over—there came coldness and misunderstanding and pride.

Adrian Dillon was poor ; his father was a second son. His uncle, Sir Humphrey Keith Dillon, had an heir of his own. Naturally their father objected. ‘He would take them, his two daughters, with him,’ he said, for he was about to go eastward then, and—well, perhaps it was her fault a little. She had spoken to Adrian once, as they stood together by the river’s edge ; and they had agreed that Cecilia was beautiful, and that a long engagement was a weary thing, and that poor marriages were even worse perhaps, and that it was all a pity, for Cecilia was a woman who might aspire to much.

He had said it all, not she ; but she had perhaps too readily agreed with him, had echoed that all these reflections of his were only sensible and true. Perhaps she should

have answered otherwise—who knows? but so it was. He wrote a stern, proud letter, and Cecilia answered with one that was yet more proud, and worse far than stern, like his; it was quite relentlessly cold. And that was nearly all that had happened. Just that one summer moon, and then they went away abroad again, and she married Sir Frederick Daring, and went off to govern provinces in the far east.

And Cecilia? Oh, nothing ever consoled her, and he never wrote again. She stayed awhile at home, and then eventually married, for no one does *not* marry in that eastern world, and in two short years she died. And there remained nothing, but the soft memory of that glorious summer time at Formosa by which to think of her, when one would recall her, as she was.

It was not for years after this, that the news came out to them that Adrian Dillon had remained also unconsoled; that he had never married; that he had thrown up his career; and that the memory of that summer

moon had so stayed with him all the years since, that his life had been of little value to him at all.

And when Lady Daring heard this, she had been very sorry, often sorry for that talk of theirs by the river's edge; and she had thought she would tell Adrian so, if she should ever meet him again.

She said many soft and pleasant things indeed of him to her daughter as they lingered in the Borghese Gardens, and often she repeated the wonder, if she 'should ever see him again?' And there, the very next morning, was Adrian, leaning where she found him, upon Bernini's fountain in the Piazza, and watching Car as she bought her flowers!

Adrian, when they left him at the corner of the Piazza, just where the Via di S. Sebastiano turned up towards the Pincian Hill, went into his hotel and had luncheon.

It was a nice little hotel, with the road sloping up the hill running close by the

western windows, where the student boys from many a monastic college, in their robes of scarlet or black or blue, went trooping up in processions continually, and from where all the gay life of the idlers of the Pincian might be seen without fatigue.

A quaint little hotel, with stone staircase winding up high, and with rooms on the top story, which Adrian had chosen with alacrity, because the view from their windows stretched clear over the hill-top and across the spires and domes and arches of all the west side of Rome.

There were scaldini, great copper basins, standing in the winding corners of the gray, stone stairs, and from them a soft warmth and a sweet scent of smouldering chestnut wood was diffused over all the house.

It was pleasant as the chill fell after dusk; for though the sun was radiant during the day now, and the streets of the old city full of flowers, it was only February still.

There was a *table-d'hôte* at the Albergo Parigi, and all the commonplace assembly

surrounded it which haunts such refectious even at Rome. But there was a difference; the tone of their conversation was other than it would have been at an English seaside resort of fashion, or at a German spa.

And Adrian, taking absently a place that was offered to him before he made up his mind whether he would adopt this way of sustenance or not, found himself so immediately interested that he forgot he was doing any so foreign to his tastes or habits, as eat his luncheon in a crowd.

There was a spare, intellectual-looking man, apparently a clergyman, just opposite to him; and there was a man of artistic aspect, and a young Englishman, who soon declared himself Oxonian, on either side. And the two had been to the fountain of Juturna, to the Rostra Julia, and to the scene of the Curtian Lake that morning; and there was a sharp controversy raging when Adrian took his seat, that waxed fierce in a triangular fire across him, while he ate his luncheon calmly, and listened with inte-

rest, and with the recognition that, this was really Rome !

“ If you disagree with Plutarch, Livy, Dionysius, and Ovid,” the voice of the clergyman was saying bitterly to the younger man, “ you may cling to the old fable of the Forum opening, and Marcus Curtius plunging, horse and full armour, into the lake, still called, as I acknowledge, ‘ Curtian.’ But I hold that the three authorities I have quoted are sufficient, and that the name has come down from Mettius Curtius, the leader of the Sabines, and not from Marcus Curtius at all.”

“ Well, I cannot help it,” answered the younger Englishman, who was evidently a little presumptuous, and quite resolute in his own view. “ When I was at Oxford, Mr. Swinford, and used to promise to myself that at some good time or another I should cross the Sacred Way, by the front of Cæsar’s tomb ; then, in spite of Plutarch, Livy, Dionysius, and Ovid, it was of the grand old Marcus Curtius I used to think.”

“ You should think correctly, my young

friend," said the reverend gentleman with asperity, "and not base your view of the Rome of the classics upon a fable, however stirring may be the incidents it relates."

"I like the old fables," said the Oxonian sturdily. "Besides, come, Livy tells too of the Forum opening, eh? You remember, sir, Book VII., 7; both views of the name get authority from Livy, you see."

"Yes, and the testimony of stone does not go far in deciding the question," put in the artist; "for the incident of the Sabine War, of Curtius washing his war-steed in the lake after that awkward battle about the loss of the Sabine wives, is graven in relief on a stone in the Capitol, and the other is preserved with equal tenacity on a marble in the Borghese Museum now."

"Nevertheless, the tale of Marcus Curtius was a fable," said Mr. Swinford emphatically; "so we shall consider that there is an end of the matter."

This sort of discussion of the divers testimony of stone in inscriptions or in bas-relief

had been the kind of thing which, for many years, had been very sympathetic to Adrian Dillon's mind. And though, to himself in particular, it had appeared more interesting to unravel the evidence of the statutes of Rameses XXII., as graven in mystical caligraphy upon ancient Egyptian stones, there had still been many times when he could have keenly appreciated a controversy on the point, of which Curtius—Marcus, of the plunging steed in the Borghese, or the Sabine leader in the Capitol,—had given his name to the lake by Cæsar's tomb.

But to-day, though he was here in Rome for the very purpose of some similar erudite investigation, such as these now sounding about him, it was extraordinary—but the thing seemed almost quite suddenly incomprehensible to him! That a man's mind could be engrossed, and his spirit and temper violently agitated on such a point of dispute! And yet, had it not long and often been so with himself?

It has been written, by some one whose spirit was undergoing at Rome the sort of ex-

perience in revulsion that was now assailing Adrian, that "one living flower is better, than many dead stones." And there *was* some one, who had seemed to him to have all the grace and the sweetness and the beauty of an opening flower, whose presence, haunting suddenly his whole heart and memory, made these dead old facts of comparative evidence from inscriptions, seem as dry as that wilderness of Ezekiel strewn with time-whitened bones.

And he arose soon, impressed truly by the class and kind of associates which the everyday currents of Roman intercourse would evidently bring to him, but amazed within himself, because it all so coldly engaged his interest—so coldly, that he wondered how it enchained theirs. And leaving them, without revealing anything of himself to them, because he wanted to get away and to be alone with what was indeed himself, and his only self, for the time being—with the thoughts of the morning's *rencontre* in the Piazza di Spagna, and with all the memories of that old, long-lost past, which it had aroused.

CHAPTER III.

DEEP SPRINGS AND SWEET.

THE first walk of the 'Forestiere' at Rome must inevitably lead him, before the sun sets, to the Hill of Gardens; up the slope of shady nooks and winding walks and floral glory—which was coveted by Messalina; which passed from Lucullus to Valerius Asiaticus; and which was held by the Pincii as the pride of their family when the days of the Empire were numbered and few.

They might well be proud; for in all its modern glory of busts and pedestals and hydraulic clock, their name stays with it still—the Monte Pincio—the centre point of modern social Rome.

Adrian found himself wandering up the winding way from the Piazza del Popolo about four o'clock. The strains of music attracted him; and besides, as he had been too tired to climb the Capitol tower in the morning, he was eager now, as the sun dipped behind St. Peter's, to arrive at some high point of vantage for a view over all.

Crowds were trooping up the Pincian. He went with them, and glorious it was indeed as he ascended, and the view broke upon him slowly, stage by stage. The winding Tiber flowed with a golden lustre beneath the deep, still light of sunset, which lay on its turbid current in broad flakes of fire. The angel of the round fortress shone high against the violet and the crimson veil of the heavens, with a curious flash, like a fire-fly, quivering in the evening air; the roof of the Pantheon, and the columns of Aurelius and Trajan, the Capitol and the Milizie towers, and the great palace of the Quirinal, all caught the golden light in vivid gleams; and in the west, towards the distance, where the Jani-

culum rose and the dark pine-fringe of Monte Mario was drawn against the lustrous sky, towered in grand and awful majesty the great cathedral of the world. Dark under the gorgeous, golden light that was scintillating and quivering everywhere, that dome of Michael Angelo rose indomitably above all, and beneath its gigantic shadow lay, sombre and wrapped in a strange silence, the palace and the mausoleum of the papal power.

There was a gay multitude crowding on the hill-top, from the Villa Medici to the Muro Forto, and the band of the Bersaglieri were playing, and modern Roman life, in all its variety and brightness, and all its infinite and vivid charm, was abroad and to be seen there, idly lingering in crowds round the circle of the band, or sauntering along the shady promenades, enjoying the soft luxury of the sunset hour. Beautiful carriages, drawn by beautiful Roman horses, carrying proud and often beautiful Roman women of the *haute noblesse*, followed one another in numbers up

the hill's steep slope by the Via di S. Sebastiano, across the level platform at the summit, and down the quick descent by the Piazza del Popolo, and out by the Porta towards the seclusion of the Borghese drives. And crowds of carriages went also with these, that carried no Italian quarterings on their panels, but the insignia of foreigners from every land and clime.

People come to Rome from really everywhere, and there are few tribes of any speech or hue who have sent no representative to join that crowd of a fine evening on the Pincio, which is surely the most international in the world.

They pleased and amused Adrian as much as the grand view had impressed him. Sensations were succeeding so rapidly to one another with him that day.

The scene amused him, until suddenly the spectacle of the central obelisk recalled to him once more the sense, of what he had come to Rome to do! He walked up to it, and recognized it at once. It had been brought

here by his own particular emperor, Hadrian, and his skilled eye conned the inscription upon its base, ‘Antoninus Osiris Oracle, utterer of truth’—Hadrian and Sabina’s monument to ‘Antinoüs,’ found in Gerusalemme outside the old imperial wall.

He knew all about it; it was the third oldest obelisk in Rome.

“This is original,” he murmured to himself, “original and pure Egyptian. That other I saw this morning before the large church at the top of these steps from the Spanish Place is only a copy, I feel convinced—a copy of just about Hadrian’s time, perhaps—I am sure that *that* is the one which Marcellinus says stood once in the garden of Sallust, which, by the way, could not possibly have been far from this point—and that one is certainly a copy. But this is another thing. Hadrian brought this one from Egypt, I dare say; but never that other. Ah! I wonder what Mr. Swinford would say to it? I will put the question to him without delay—to-night at dinner; yes, I declare I will. Come!

this is my third obelisk ; I believe there are at least ten. That is a good one in the People's Place down there," he went on, musing dreamily in an abstracted way ; "time at Rome of Augustus—I never saw anything finer than that one in its way : Seti and Rameses, the blind king and his son—there is no doubt about the names—and it is from the temple at Heliopolis, too, as that inscription of Augustus says. It is a fine thing. I take it that is the original one for which the ships were consecrated at Puteoli ; it came here about the date of Cleopatra's death, and—yes—it is interesting seeing a thing when one has thought about it so much ; but ah ! what has happened to me ? Am I drunk with the wine of the Great City ? Have I lost my realizing power in my journey to this shrine and centre of human history ? Have I lost my way to Thebes and Heliopolis, and strayed into the Garden of Hesperides instead ? Am I dreaming ? Oh, Arcadia ! I also ! have I become entangled, all suddenly again entangled, in

thy sylvan shades? Obelisks are a bore sometimes, surely; at least, so many of them! I could wish I had been satisfied with our acquisition on the Embankment at home. For here, here at Rome—ah! surely that is my cousin Vere Daring bowing so charmingly from that carriage?

And so certainly it was.

Drawn up under the shade of the ilex-trees, just where the grand sunset view was seen in its perfection, within hearing of the strains of the Valse Viennese, which the Bersaglieri were playing with such verve and rhythm, was a barouche that looked English in its excellence and simplicity, and which was 'good' at every point. Ensconced in it were Lady Daring and Car, both dressed to that highest degree of finish to which an afternoon *toilette de visite* can be carried with perfection of good taste.

It had been a lovely afternoon; it was nearly the height and climax of the carnival, and indeed everybody was dressed up to the very apex of fashion on the Pincian Hill.

Adrian, too, had cast off his travelling attire by this time, and was as *cap-à-pie* in his own unaffected British style as every one else. And as he approached the carriage—walking with an eager step, raising his hat as he drew near them, and throwing his head back at the same time with a gesture of pleasure and a glad, bright smile—Lady Daring thought, with a touch of pathos, what a charming-looking man he was, so handsome in that simple, high-bred style she had always so much appreciated, and with such a fine nature, so eager and earnest and true.

It had all been a pity, that jar in the long past which had driven him in solitude over that dreary Egyptian desert of inscriptions, pyramids, and hieroglyphics—all a pity, however—

“Well, my cousin, so you have discovered the Pincian obelisk on its eminence here? And is it the object you find the most fascinating on all this world-famed hill?”

“I do not find it fascinating in the very least,” he said.

He was smiling still, and turned from her softly cynical face to Car, who was leaning back by her mother's side, and who was looking across at him, as he approached, with a curious, speculative, half-questioning expression. She answered his salutation with a sunny smile, which flitted for an instant across her face and again left it grave, and for a moment she turned away from his side of the carriage, and looked over the glorious sunset view. Then suddenly, he was conscious, that from her far corner of the carriage, she turned upon him again her clear, lustrous eyes, and he felt that she proceeded to scrutinize him, as he leant on the door and answered her mother's rallying words, and that she did it calmly and gravely, with a quiet gaze which was searchingly steady and keen.

"You were looking intently enough at that obelisk, at all events," continued Lady Daring. "Do you know, we drove round you twice before you even observed us?"

"Did you? I am very sorry. How stupid

I am ! But yes, oh, yes, it is interesting," he went on indifferently ; " it is the obelisk from the Varianus Circus. Of course I like to see it, as you know. But I was just thinking it rather a dull affair at that precise moment, and was more conscious of the charm of that valse music, and of the brightness of the whole scene than of the value to science of the immortal evidence that Hadrian and Sabina deemed Antinous to be the ' utterer of truth.' What a charming scene it all is, to be sure ! What a view ! What a bright assembly ! What variety ! What a glow of colour ! I somehow never realized there was all this pomp and fashion in modern Rome."

"The most brilliant and diversified winter society in Europe, my dear cousin," Lady Daring replied ; "and there are many of the loveliest women in all Rome on the Pincian this evening. I have seen the famous Principessa Branacia and the Duchessa Pantuoli pass while we have been talking already ; and see," she added, bowing with a radiant smile, as a beautiful victoria swept by them,

"that is the Spanish Contessa Zolinos, the prettiest of them all, to my mind."

"There is Cardinal Andeloni," said Car, and Lady Daring bent again in answer to a grave salutation from the great Ecclesiastic ; and again as the carriage of the English Ambassador drove along the alley and down towards the Borghese Woods, and again, and again, as many acquaintances of divers nations passed her barouche in their gay and pretty carriages, or sauntered beneath the ilex shades on foot.

Adrian remained leaning on their carriage door.

"You know everybody, Vere," he said.

"Oh, no ; almost no one," she replied, laughing. "If you had only a conception of how many there are to know, and of how diversified a kind they are, too, and from how many climes. We know only a very few. But I have some dear old friends here of my long-ago years, Adrian, from my father's diplomatic circles : people who have known me always, and they have been kind."

There are no receptions, you know, at our Embassy this winter, for all has lately been changed there ; but our present Ambassador, who has just driven past us, I have known since my father had the Hague, more than twenty years ago. So we *have* had all that is most pleasant, I think, of what is really Rome, and Car has enjoyed it, too : have you not, little girl ? ” she added.

Car brightened and smiled a ready assent, but evidently she was not just then thinking of this her first winter’s conquests and experiences. She was perseveringly, and with the same speculative look in her eyes, continuing her scrutiny of Adrian. She looked across at him under the falling fringe of her lace parasol, and fancied that he was therefore unconscious of the scrutiny, and of the grave question in her eyes.

But he was quite acutely conscious of it the whole time ; and neither was he thinking altogether, of anything concerning the attractions of Roman society, which Lady Daring described volubly the while. He had turned

a little away for a moment, leaving only his clear, firm profile for inspection from beneath the parasol fringe; and he pretended, in obedience to Lady Daring's continuous indications, to be engrossed in all he saw, in all the gay crowd of English and American and Italian idlers, who were sauntering round the Bersaglieri bandsmen in the shade or in the sunset, through the soft evening hour.

He watched them all, and gave ready echo to her words, and assent to her enthusiastic admiration as one after another the pretty carriages with their many graceful inmates followed each other in swift array; and as the college youths trooped past in their blue or scarlet, and sisters of La Carita flitted down the ilex alleys, and smart soldiers of the Pope's Guard, or the King's Hussars, or the gay little Bersaglieri strode along the terrace; and as cardinals, in their low carriages, drawn by the Pope's black, long-tailed steeds, drew up to enjoy the view, and priests of every grade in the sacred office paced with slow footsteps among the crowd.

As all the gay, diversified, many-coloured multitude trooped past them in the sunset glow, he looked absently at them, and seemed to listen while his cousin talked; but all the while, as beneath the influence of a soft electric force, he could feel every nerve thrill, and every pulse quickened in his responsive magnetic being, under the soft, firm hold of those radiant, grave, blue eyes, that from under the fringe of that lace parasol continued their veiled scrutiny of his still.

Suddenly he turned round—he looked straight across Lady Daring to where Car was ensconced so quietly by her side. The parasol was raised instantly, and the full, clear gaze of the bright eyes met his.

“Are you satisfied?” he said in a quiet tone, and Lady Daring looked round at Car with a little mystified surprise.

There was an instant’s silence.

“Satisfied! yes, I fancy she is much more than satisfied; I think she has really quite thoroughly enjoyed it all.”

For Lady Daring's mind was still wandering in the pleasant and sunny garden of Roman social life.

The girl laughed low, a sweet light quivering for a moment in her eyes as she still met that steady gaze from his, which said so clearly, 'If you wish to look well at me, to weigh my reality and worth, do so, but look me straight and full in the eyes, please, and I will answer your scrutiny, if you will.'

She understood him, and his gaze lasted for that moment of silence, and she answered its challenge with a bright courage, by no means at all dismayed. Then she laughed that low, sweet laugh as her mother spoke, and she lowered her eyes, finding them refuge in a bunch of roses that lay unheeded until now in rich crimson contrast against the soft cream tint of her dress.

And Lady Daring went on again,—

"But after all," she exclaimed, "I do not like the Pincian of an afternoon, the sunset always excepted, though under the circum-

stances even that is rarely a thing of joy. I do hate this crowd ; we never remain here, and we only drew up this afternoon because we descried you, mooning over there at your obelisk, Adrian. But I am going now ; can we not take you anywhere ? will you drive ? I have some cards to leave, but there would be time for everything, if you would like us to convey you anywhere first. It is so fine this evening, we may still stay out an hour."

"Thank you," he answered ; "you are very good, but I—shall I not be in your way ?"

"Not in the least ; do come in."

He opened the carriage door and took his place on the seat opposite to them ; and as the footman shut him in, and Lady Daring gave her orders rapidly, he leant back, looked around him upon the gay scene, and across to where the sunset glow was deepening gorgeously behind St. Peter's dome ; and then he glanced once towards his neglected obelisk, and from it to Car's bending face, and the thought swept across his mind and

quivered curiously to his heart, that this was all quite extraordinarily pleasant to him, and that the fair and bright things of life had a subtle, strong fascination of their own. Even such foolish things as the idling through the sunset hour in a lady's carriage, doing nothing, tangibly nothing, save leaving cards of compliment from door to door.

His cousin Vere tried to make him leave his cards with theirs at some places, but that was a step beyond him still, and he persisted that he would be too short a time at Rome to make acquaintances of any kind. And although Lady Daring said it was too absurd to *talk* even—of his going so quickly, still she could not quite make him produce his cards.

But she left numbers of her own, with Car's name and that of Sir Frederick, and explained to him about each different personage as they passed from door to door, and she made continuous and most pleasant plans and projects for him, as they turned

from each, taking up her running thread again and again.

“Ah, you must go to the English Embassy, Adrian; Frederick shall take you there; we cannot let you be *savage*, my cousin; and yes, I will take you to the Princess Branacia’s little breakfast to-morrow. I know her so well, and she is so charming; I can easily get you a card. And I should like to introduce you to dear Mrs. Walrond, too; the pleasantest centre of everything English at Rome is her delightful *salon*; one never knows; you can never tell when you may want to come here again; and, dear me, shall you only stay one week? What a pity!—the great ball at the Quirinal is put off for a fortnight from next Thursday, because the old Prince Portalonia died last night. Oh! you must stay, Adrian; you must see a ball at the palace; we can arrange it all so easily for you, can we not, Car, through our charming Marchese, the king’s master of the ceremonies?—he is quite an intimate friend of ours; yes, you really must see it all.”

Lady Daring had such a keen enthusiasm for people doing entirely and altogether the right thing; for their knowing the right people, and going to what each day or evening was the right place; and if they did not do so, she had very slight patience with them, and gradually cared little about them, in a general way, at all. But with Adrian it was different. She knew his ways of old, and meant, if possible, to win him out of them.

Meanwhile Adrian sat very happily, leaning back on the soft cushions of his cousin's carriage, opposite to her, smiling his thanks for her interest and ready enterprise for his sake; grateful for this, and still more grateful because she took him such a charming drive, and because she allowed him to *be* there, just where it was, for the time being, so intensely pleasant for him to be.

The lace parasol was held rather low as they drove, and as Lady Daring talked—and Car sat a little forward and upright, often leaning her soft cheek against the parasol's

long, ivory stem. Her face was turned nearly all the while a little away from Adrian's side of the carriage, and she looked out steadily now in an opposite direction, as if she were strangely interested in every object they passed. And as Lady Daring's flow of speech was interrupted now and then as she busied herself with her calling-cards, and her attention was drawn away, Adrian was left occasionally, to what he felt to be his turn—and he profited, making his observations from his side.

He noted first, as it seemed to him, the more external and superficial points. He observed that Car wore no flying-off, æsthetic-looking hat, like many young ladies of the Pincian promenade, but a delicate, cream-lace bonnet, which he thought the loveliest little head-dress he had ever seen. It sat lightly on the thick, soft cloud of her gold-brown hair, the delicate lace nestling in the wavy tresses. Such trivial points of her pleasing external aspect seemed first to reach him, and the sense of their general complete-

ness and perfect fitness in all detail seemed to be conveyed to him as a part of her superficial self.

But as he could now and then during this drive abandon himself to a quiet, scrutinizing gaze (that went deeper in his thought of her than any of these external points), the wonderful charm of the girl's expressive countenance grew upon him with electric speed. It was such a proud, sensitive young face, every feature cut so delicately, the outline so finely drawn. There was reserve and a touch of hauteur in the lips; they were firm towards the corners, and expressed force of purpose there; but they curved beautifully with a soft fulness to the centre, where they parted slightly, just where Venus loves to curve in an arch of ruby, the likeness of Cupid's bow; and there was a tremulous, changeful quiver often on the parted lips that gave her countenance constant vivacity, for it answered the changeful light in the clear eyes; and as the eyes seemed always looking out and seeing far, and noting many

things, the *réplique* of bright expression played continually between them and the curving mouth. They expressed alike, a fancy that was rarely dim, and a mind that was never idle; and they seemed ever eager with some ready thought, that, beaming in the bright gaze and trembling on the mobile lip, awaited only the touch of sympathy to be unsealed in speech.

But a habit of frequent silence had evidently grown over her, probably because her mother talked much and easily, and possibly because in the developing days of her young life she may have been much alone.

It was a charming drive they took Adrian, and full of interest at every point—such an hour's drive as you can take at Rome and there only, in no other city upon this earth.

For it is only there, that the threads of all human history seem to be woven and twined together in a network so close as to be quite inseparable; and only there, that we seem sometimes to gaze over the ages—over all the mighty ages that have been—to gaze

and dream and wonder, and gaze silently again—until the panoramic vista becomes clear to us, as the history of all the world may become, perhaps, when we gaze back on it in the sunlight of eternity from the Day of Doom.

But though they passed many things of most thrilling interest, both classical, mediæval, and Egyptian, too, as they drove along; and though fine points of view opened up to them everywhere, and many buildings quite marvellous in antiquity and architectural grandeur were passed upon their way, Adrian observed far less, and admired less, than he ought to have done. For he had embarked on a novel line of observation and of eager study, which absorbed him quite curiously now!

It was getting late, and it was at the last house at which Lady Daring proposed to stop—a Palazzo in a quaint, old courtyard—that the servant who took her cards said that 'La Signora Pallavicini was a little suffering, and had told him to say, if miladi called, that she would be so charmed to see

her.' And accordingly Lady Daring felt it incumbent upon her to alight.

"It is getting very late," she repeated, as she stepped from the carriage; "I will not remain above five minutes; but, as she wishes it, I must just go in. Adrian, I hope Car may be able to amuse you; I shall not keep you waiting long."

And she passed through the great, dusky archway of the portico into the huge, dark house, leaving them sitting in the carriage in the old court.

They were alone then, for the first time, those two, quite by themselves then, together, and—alone.

The evening was falling in soft, dusky shadows around them now, especially within this grey palace-yard.

The shadows were deepening beneath the heavy stonework cornices, and the broad, stone ledges of the barred windows and of the carved balustrades of the heavy balconies that projected just above their heads; and only in the centre of the court the sun-

set glow seemed still to linger on the silvery spray of a fountain which rose towards the blue darkening sky of the evening, from a cornucopia held aloft in one hand by a graceful, marble water-god, who caught the falling shower in an open, pink-lined ear of Venus, which he held extended in the other, and from whence the water fell again with rippling musical cadence into the stone basin at his feet. Great marble vases filled with orange-trees stood round the fountain, and the air of the warm, sheltered courtyard, where the sun-rays had fallen so hot and so strong all through the day, was laden with the faint, sweet scent of the delicate snowy blossom glistening among the dark, green leaves.

They were alone, in the twilight of the soft evening.

Adrian's heart beat suddenly, as it had not done for years; and Car bent a little forward, and laid her closed parasol down on her mother's place.

She took up the great bunch of crimson roses between her hands, and she contemplated

them calmly for one instant; not to cover any sort of shyness or conscious embarrassment that might have sprung from their suddenly deserted position, but seemingly to reflect for that moment, as he was still silent, upon how she should begin.

Then her eyes were raised—so quietly, so earnestly to his, and again with that bright light of wonder and of inquiry in them which he had encountered before during that afternoon.

“Will you tell me,” she said, “now we have time, will you tell me why the Egyptian obelisks and inscriptions interest you so very, very much? I have been trying to think it out for myself ever since—since we first found you in the Piazza this morning, but I cannot quite understand—I do not quite see.”

The eager, earnest eyes held his, while she questioned him, with such an intense expression of interest in their sweet, blue depth, that he almost smiled at her child-like gravity, as she asked her question with purpose so direct and clear; and yet there was some-

thing in her gaze that thrilled him strangely ; because, veiled beneath the earnest interest of the inquiry, there was a lovely, tremulous gleam of sympathetic solicitude, which he felt, with that thrill of his heart's responsive echo, was a sympathy far less for his one especial subject of erudite investigation, than for *himself*—for himself and his history, and his heart's veiled and passionate sorrow, of which she knew.

But he answered the question simply (in his spoken reply), answered it just directly as it had been uttered ; and the response to that deeper inquiry, which the sweet, blue eyes were making of his heart, as to the real spring of curious motives there—the response to this, he intrusted confidently to that same silent language, in which he, for his own part, was also eloquent.

His steel blue eyes, looking straight into hers, as they sat in the soft twilight together, said in that eager and voiceless speech things that were strangely different from his cool, demure words.

“Do you really care to know what is the

interest of deciphering Egyptian inscriptions?" he said.

She knit her low, fair brow for an instant above the dark, delicately arched lines, and the lids fell over the questioning eyes. She paused, and then raised them again and looked full at him.

"Yes, indeed, I really do; I want really to know—I like to understand; I think about things so much sometimes—but perhaps you may not care to tell me?"

"I do care," he replied. "I should like to tell you everything—all the little I know. I should like to tell you anything you may care to ask me, and perhaps many other things besides."

"I should like to ask you many, many things," she answered him. "I think there are things, many different kinds of things, which I should like to ask you about, that I think about often, and that I know you would understand."

"Shall we begin with the hieroglyphics?" he replied softly, looking with a curious

gleam of infinite amusement and gentleness into her grave eyes.

"Is it perhaps because they are so difficult that they interest you?" she said.

"Not exactly—though, to a certain degree, yes; there is a curious stimulus to effort in the sense that what becomes acquired and certain knowledge to *you* is a sealed mystery to the mass of men, and that you may learn to explain to others what, without your explanation, or such as yours, they may never understand."

"But what do you explain?"

"I—individually, nothing; at least, not as yet; but others in my groove of investigation do."

"But what?" she repeated.

"The minds of great men, of great nations, in great times long ages before our own, or any of which we clearly know. And the chronicle of great and mighty deeds that have gone away into myth and mystery, after doing the part allotted to them in the forming of the world, with which *we* have to do."

"I like that," said Car softly. "Go on, please. Tell me a little more, and first about your obelisks."

"Ah! the obelisks—well, they illustrate what I just say. We see them around us here in Rome, where they have been for centuries trophies of enterprise, but meaningless, except as such; and we go first back to Marcellinus, and we learn how they came here; how at Thebes, among other wondrous works of art and architecture, he there saw many obelisks in their original places, formed like a sun-ray, and covered with strange devices—and now, since Young and Champollion and many others have taught us, we know that every detail of these strange devices, that perplexed Marcellinus nearly two thousand years ago, has a meaning (quite clear, as it becomes intelligible to us), and that by them we may surely read, the history of those ages, that have been. We find a clearly defined science of allegoric meaning that never alters. On pyramid, obelisk, or single stone the vulture means

always the same, is always the insignia of nature, and the bee the symbol of a king. He may sting, if so he pleases, as well as scatter sweetness around ; and so with many emblems, and many of them so pretty, too. But do you care about it really?—somehow I do not to-day, not as much as I thought I did ; there is surely an intense power of life in the very air around us here,” he went on suddenly. “It makes one want to live and feel and do, among things of beauty and things of life, so that hieroglyphics seem somehow, to have become suddenly for me, a very slumbrous theme !”

“I think it is the ripple of that fountain that is slumbrous,” she answered with a little laugh. “I like to hear you talk of your hieroglyphics—I like it very much.”

“And I like to talk to you,” he said suddenly in a lowered tone ; “but it need not be always of hieroglyphics ?”

“Oh, no,” she said, also in a softened voice, as she lowered her gaze to her bunch of roses,—“oh, no, there are so many things.”

“Will you tell me one thing,” he said then, bending a little towards her, and trying to look up under her drooping eyelids again,—“will you tell me, have you ever heard of me in your life before until now—ever known anything of me at all in any way?”

She looked up once more, quite gravely, as at first, straight and with quiet composure, into his eyes.

“Never,” she said, “never in all my life until yesterday afternoon; but I think I have known you always, I fancy I have often thought of you,” she said.

“And I do not think that you have ever been absent from my life,” he answered. “But then since this morning I somehow begin to believe in the transmigration of affinities—not souls, for there *is* a certain difference between now and then, between you and *her*.” His voice sank away almost to a whisper as he uttered those last words, as if he spoke to his own heart, and murmured to his memories more than to her.

“Yes, I know,” she answered, bending her

head with that sweet gleam of sympathetic feeling coming again into the depths of her eyes, "I know, yesterday mother told me."

"You are the same, and yet another," he added; "so I do not say that I believe in the transmigration of souls."

"No, I am different—quite different," she answered him; "if I had been there—if I had been then, I mean, I do not think I should have done just the same."

"No, and I do not believe it either," he said emphatically.

And at that moment the old palace doors were flung open, and Lady Daring emerged.

And none too soon, considering everything. For there, in the soft twilight, with the fountain water-god tossing its silver spray from shell to shell, and with the musical ripple falling sweetly on their ears, these two, were fast straying into pleasing converse on perilously softening themes; and the admirable intelligence with which they had started, in clear, deliberate accents, on the discussion of

things most interesting and erudite, was fast subsiding into the low tones and hesitating murmur, in which are exchanged soft confidences—of quite another kind !

CHAPTER IV.

“BE MY CICERONE.”

“Now, this is the very thing we ought *never* to do,” said Lady Daring in despairing tones, as she took her place in the carriage, and as they turned out of the courtyard. “The very way, so people tell me, to get fever and all sorts of dreadful things at Rome is just exactly what we are doing—driving just after sunset, coming out into the evening mist after talking as fast as one could in somebody’s warm boudoir; and, worse still, what I did unfortunately in leaving you two sitting in the chill shadows of the courtyard here. I do wish dear Signora Pallavicini could have done without seeing me for this afternoon; but really she was very pleased, and I am

glad I went up. But you two, I do hope you have not caught cold. Car, my darling child, do put that Rhumpoor Chudder of mine round your shoulders ; and, Adrian, why, you have not even got your overcoat ; you should never drive in the afternoon at Rome without it."

"I did not know I was going to drive," he answered, smiling pleasantly at her, as if he had not minded on this particular occasion the dread of chill, and as if the ardour of her friendship, which sent her up the long palace stairs to visit La Contessa Pallavicini, had not been a source of regret to him. He bent forward as she looked with disquietude at him, sitting opposite to her, clad only in a grey frock-coat, such as he wore often in London in June.

"Do not fear for me," he said ; "I am quite warm and happy, thank you ; but let me wrap this round you, your raiments are much thinner than mine, be it said."

He drew her thick Indian cashmere of rich, soft hue close round her shoulders as he

spoke, and she allowed him, thanking him presently with her radiant smile.

And Car obeyed her at the same time, throwing a cream-coloured Rhumpoor Chudder in light folds across her shoulders, above her dress of soft-hued vecuna.

“Not that it is cold, for the air is really delicious,” said Lady Daring; “but one is told so much of its subtle dangers here. What a lovely evening it is!” she added, as they crossed the great square of the Quirinal, and the view opened out before them, beautiful with a new glory now, as the mists of the sunset rolled away from the distant domes and arches and palace roofs, and the moon shone out suddenly in a sapphire sky. “Lovely as is the sunshine of this Italia,” murmured Lady Daring softly, “and radiant as is her midday heaven of turquoise blue, I do think the hue of the winter evening sky, darkening and deepening into night, is yet more exquisite, more wonderful still,” and she sighed, a quivering, tremulous sigh of intensely appreciative feeling, as the car-

riage rolled swiftly on, and turned downwards suddenly through narrow, darkening streets, where the old houses stood close and towered high, and where, beyond their roofs and summer loggie set aloft, little of the sapphire skies could now be seen—just a blue strip, with the crescent of the half-moon set slanting across it, like a scimitar of gold. "And what have you two been talking about?" she said presently. "I hope Car managed to amuse you, Adrian, and prevented your execrating me for keeping you waiting at a lady's door."

"Were we waiting?" he answered. "I did not seem to know it."

"A pretty compliment for you, Car, and neatly and concisely put. What did you talk about?"

"About Egyptian obelisks, mother," was the demure and promptly given reply, for which Adrian was grateful to her. For at that moment the sensation of the simple fact that they *had* talked together was so strong upon him that he could not have recalled one

word they said. 'Speech,' seemed to have had so little to do with it, to have taken so subordinate a part in the sweetness of that intercourse, which had been so expressive and so swift. "We talked of Egyptian hieroglyphics, too, a great deal," Car added, after a little pause.

Lady Daring laughed, and turned her sparkling, dark eyes, full of amusement, upon Car's face.

"About hieroglyphics! What *can* you know, my dear little girl," she exclaimed, "about such things? That comes of having just left one's school-days behind one, Adrian, you see. I believe I shall have to turn you over to this little philosopher when you want to air your own subjects just now and then. Does she really know anything about hieroglyphics, now?"

"Mr. Dillon told me, *madre mia*," she answered again, for he only laughed softly, and was silent still, "about the bee and the vulture, which mean nature and a king."

"That is all quite beyond me," exclaimed

Lady Daring, and she laughed brightly again.

Just then they crossed in front of the Palazzo, where the Virgin of Agrippa, encircled by her sisters of old allegory, and supported by Neptune and his ocean steeds, and the Tritons with their horns, presides over that splendid fount of water, to whose source that virgin led Agrippa once, at the well-spring by her father's door. The foam was glittering beneath the moon-rays like molten silver; and the water, rushing over rock and stone, shone with quite a living lustre, as it poured in countless streams and cataracts from out the marble monsters' wide-gaping mouths.

The way widened here; there was space above their heads now for a stretch of sapphire blue, and around the scimitar of the young moon the first-coming stars shone in the darkening sky—those glittering messengers heralding that vast array—the myriads of lustrous jewels, which are the glory of the Roman night.

A crush of carts and carriages obstructed their progress for a moment; they paused before the great fountain, and with mutual accord glanced one to the other, with eyes glistening in eagerness of admiration, and with intense enjoyment of that moonlit vision—that dancing, foaming, impetuous thing!

“The Fountain of Trevi,” murmured Lady Daring.

“How splendid!” exclaimed Adrian; “what a glorious sight!”

“Very grand in this silver moonlight,” said Lady Daring. “Yes, I do think moonlight makes everything more infinitely, more ineffably lovely at Rome.”

“Oh, madre mia,” whispered Car, suddenly catching back the quick, impetuous sigh that came trembling from between her parted lips; “madre mia, may we go to the Colosseum? Do come, in this glorious moonlight! What a time for—him—to have his first view; for him to feel what it can really be!—oh, do let us turn back and go just for ten minutes to the Colosseum.”

"The Colosseum by moonlight! What! to catch a fever like Daisy Miller, you little, foolish girl; no, no, it is bad enough to have you out at all at such an hour."

"Oh, mother, carissima mia!" she pleaded—for as all their latter phase of life together, had been lived as yet in Italy, she had got into the way of persuading her mother in those soft, caressing Italian words.

But this evening Lady Daring was quite obdurate.

"We must really drive straight home, and as for showing Adrian the great sights of Rome, Car, ma mie, we may feel quite confident that he will see everything that is to be seen without any help from us. How much had you not seen already when we found you on the Pincian this afternoon? Half the obelisks of the Eternal City, I believe?"

"Ah, but I wish you would show me things," he answered; "I should enjoy them under your direction ten times more. I have such a little while, will you not become my cicerone, and show me some of the wonders

which I should take any amount of time to discover for myself?"

"Oh, that is nonsense," laughed Lady Daring; "you know exactly what there is to see, and how to enjoy it, too; you have prepared your faculty of vision, Adrian, with which to look at Rome, long, long before you came here to see it. And that I perceive to be the case, my cousin, all your talk about your obelisks notwithstanding. But we will show you anything you please. Tell us, what is your own idea?"

"My ideas, when I started for Rome, as I told you this morning, were generally based on the Rosetta Stone. I had forgotten and ceased to anticipate, or think, about all the infinities of association which the glorious old place has revealed to me already. But my ideas now—" he paused, and glanced inquiringly, hesitatingly, towards Car.

Perhaps he thought she could best interpret what were his present ideas.

Lady Daring was looking away from him into the moonlit darkness of the narrow

streets through which the carriage was rolling quickly now. And as he paused she went on,—

"It is a curious thing to follow out, but really this city does contain so much, and such variety, that it appears to me each person must form a view of his own of what is really Rome, and each carry away a distinct memory and impression accordingly."

"'Each finds here, just value, for what he brings,'" quoted Adrian.

"Yes, just exactly so," replied Lady Daring, while Car's eyes brightened up; for, though she spoke not, the thought pleased her, as a thought on almost anything nearly always did.

She looked eager to pursue it, and her glance met Adrian's in the dim light suddenly, keen and clear with the reflex of some fancy or feeling within herself, which she waited eagerly to express to him, but for the moment her mother continued,—

"Yes, if we each were to say, now, what we should like to show you—what we

ourselves would visit if we came for the first time, or returned after a long absence, to Rome, it would be curious, the difference."

"Ah! there are so many things," murmured Car with that gentle sigh again, "there is so much we might show him."

"The galleries," began her mother.

"Oh, yes, of course, all of them," replied the girl with an absolute fervour of enthusiasm in her voice now, as her excitement rose in the intense interest of the fair prospect, and at the width of enterprise it implied.

"All the greatest, at least," said Adrian, smiling with a warm glance of gratitude in his eyes now, as he watched her quickening interest and solicitude for him.

"Oh, more than the greatest," she answered. "Do you know, if I made a pilgrimage here after a long time, it is not so much to the great galleries, like the Vatican or the Capitol, that I would go immediately; it is not these I should so tenderly desire to see, except, perhaps, just one or two things in each of them—yes, one or two; but be-

yond and before them I should make my pilgrimage to the Cenci in the Barbarini, to the Rospigliosi, to the garden and the loggia there with that sweet, quiet view, not so much for the 'Aurora' at all; and I would go to the little Sistine Chapel in the S. Maria Maggiore and hear an angelus, and to one or two studios I know of, and to—"

"Ah, your list is growing, Car," her mother said with a soft laugh, and looking into the girl's face with a tender, proud glance of pleasure, in which amusement mingled curiously, too.

The fervent young enthusiasm so touched and so amused her, as it always did, all at the same time and all together. But Adrian wished for no interruption of the eagerly given list of her favourite corners of the mighty city, and he would hear more, as she paused at her mother's light laugh. He bent towards her, and said in a low courteous tone,—

"Will you take me, then, without fail ;

will you promise to take me to see all these things ?”

“ You will make Car’s pilgrimage with her? Well, why should you not ?—it is a charming project in many ways. But now, do you know, if I were making a pilgrimage here, to visit the shrines that from association have become most dear to me, I am not sure that among the very first I should not go to the Fontana at the Ponte Sisto, where Ouida’s old Crispin sat, where the Faun sang to him in the musical waters, and where Ariadne came to seek her way to the Portico of Octavia, which had become the fish market of the Ghetto, while she dreamt of it as still the haunt of the gods. Ah ! in all our modern writings about this glorious old place there is no more beautiful book than that poem in prose, Ouida’s lovely ‘Ariadne;’ yes, I shall make my pilgrimage to the Ponte Sisto every time that I return to Rome. But meanwhile Adrian has seen quite enough for one afternoon, and I am glad to say we are at home. Why, your father will have come

in long ago from his sketching, Car, and he will be distressed at our being so late. Here we are, quite close to your hotel, Adrian, in our old Piazza again," she added, as they swept down by the boat fountain once more, and passed the scene of their *rencontre* of the morning. "Will you mind walking across the corner to your hotel?" she added, as the carriage stopped; "this big archway is our door."

"Walk across? of course I will. How good you have been to me," said her cousin; "so kind to have taken me such a charming drive. How many thanks I owe you!—what can I say?"

"*Au contraire*, we should thank you for your pleasant escort," replied Lady Darling. "When shall we see you again?" she continued, pausing as the footman opened the door, and Adrian descended and quickly turned to assist her to alight.

She bent forward and smiled kindly at him, as she let him take her hand.

“When shall we see you again? You have not yet met my husband since you arrived at Rome. Stay; let me think. We are going nowhere, are we, this evening, Car? I am sure I remember it was a blank night, for I refused the Serini’s ‘musicale;’ and it does not matter about the Finches’ ‘at home.’ Yes, you will find us, if you will come in at nine o’clock to-night in the unconventional way in which everybody visits here. I know Frederick will be so pleased to see you again. Do come!”

“I will come with a great deal of pleasure,” he answered.

And then she swept her long skirts over the swinging steps, and passed him with a smile of dismissal to her door.

Car did not require much assistance, but she let her hand rest also on his for one moment while she alighted, and one sweet glance of those wonderful eyes of hers, that were blue in the soft light as with the sapphire gleam of the sky above their heads, shone deep into his for that moment, and

made his heart beat within him as if touched by electric fire.

Up the stone stairs of his hotel went Adrian, a few minutes after this parting, in a singularly happy frame of mind.

That he was the same man who, less than a week ago, had paced the gray pavement, through the gray fogs, from the Albany to the British Museum in a condition of spiritual being grayer than the fogs or the pavement ; that he was the same man who had done those things with indifferent content, he did not believe in the least (for the time being), and it would have been useless for any one to have endeavoured to prove logically to him that undoubtedly self-evident fact.

For he could not feel it ; he could not have believed it ; he was not the same man ! His whole identity, his whole mental, sensible, and spiritual individuality had changed, and what could you alter more than these ? Positively it would be difficult to say. The whole conditions and *entourage* of his exist-

ence pleased him now; had they ever done so before?

As he went slowly up the stone stairs, with its soft, thick matting and warm glow of lamplight, he liked it all; and the subtle fragrance of burning, sweet-scented wood that filled the whole house was pleasant also. It rose from the large copper scaldini which stood at each corner of the landings of the staircase, each filled with warm, smouldering charcoal that shone with a rich, deep, ruby glow, and diffused that sense of warmth and comfort and welcome as he went up the stairs.

He descended again speedily, to find that the *table-d'hôte* repast was nearly over, but he did not care about that, as in his poetic frame of mind just then, dinner was a point of small moment to him so long as he could get it over and reach the hour of nine.

Besides, Mr. Possidoni was far too assiduous a host to allow any one of his guests to suffer default of their particular comforts, and on a small table in a window-recess Adrian

found a solitary repast delicately prepared for him.

He found he was seated just behind the white cranium of Mr. Swinford, and opposite, on the other side, beyond Mr. Swinford's shoulders, he could see the Oxonian and the 'æsthete' seated, in consequence of his own absence, now side by side.

They were supported respectively on one side by an American travelling at the head of a large family party, who extended beyond him along the table to the right, and on the other side by an English spinster, who was 'doing Rome' and letting everybody within reach of her know that she did it.

Much sharp controversy had evidently been raging this evening, and Mr. Swinford's amiable-looking and lady-like wife, as she ventured to glance over her shoulder, to see who Adrian might be, and what he was doing, looked as if she had gone through a great deal during that dinner.

Controversy, when it extends far along the flanks to right and left of a *table-d'hôte*, and

especially when it becomes international, is apt to be fatiguing as an experience, and not always, even at Rome, so instructive as one might expect. In point of fact, under such circumstances, the sublime tends towards the comical, so persistently, and with such purpose of will, that the comical generally assimilates and absorbs it, until they are completely one.

Fierce dissension had been going on over the temple of Castor and Pollux, and the Regia Numæ, and on the Vestal Virgins, all of which the English spinster had visited that day. And it was she who had accordingly insisted upon these spots as the centres of public discussion for the evening, in defiance of the 'æsthete,' who wished to enlarge on the Tyrean dyes and the curio shops of the Ghetto, where he happened to have spent the day; and likewise of the Oxonian, who had been to 'the street of the ox-heads.' Mr. Swinford, indeed, who had been tracing out the *Ædem Larium* at the beginning of the Via Sacra on the Palatine Hill, the spinster

had talked down with much difficulty; but just as Adrian finished his *consommé* she seemed to gain the day, for Mr. Swinford had so much to say either upon Castor and Pollux or the Vestal Virgins, that he consented finally to divert the particular channel of his own remarks. For, after all, it was evidently much the same what subject, scene, era, road, ruin, street, or edifice they touched upon, so long as each had the opportunity given him or her, to relate his own experiences in investigation, and to say his own especial say.

Mr. Swinford did not give any one much opportunity certainly, once he got off with a fair start; but then he was very edifying, very lucid, very erudite, and even Miss Brownrigg was silenced at last, and the Oxonian toned to respectful attention, and the American reduced to open-eyed amazement, and the 'æsthete' to a languid posture, in which he ate maccaroons absently, and gazed sadly upon his plate, when Mr. Swinford brought all his battery forth,

and cited again, one after another, with amazing glibness, the same great authorities with whom he had extinguished Martius Curtius at lunch. Suetonius, Pliny, Dionysius, Horace, and Plutarch; they seemed all as familiar to the Roman diners at *table-d'hôtes*, and were quoted as playfully, as Dickens or Artemus Ward might be at home.

He told of Pliny's raven in the temple of Castor and Pollux—on this the Oxonian had a view; he treated eloquently of the battle of Regillus, and withal spoke thereof with much warlike ardour for a man of peace; he gave them in Horace's own graphic words, and in the original, accounts of how 'the yellow Tiber rose, with waves forced back from the Tuscan shores,' to sweep over the Vestal Temple, and to demolish the Regia Numæ, the monument of the kings; and above all, of the vestal maidens did he quote them many things, until Miss Brownrigg herself rushed with burning ardour to the fray, and broke in with controversy irre-

pressible, to challenge his statement from the "Fasti," vi. 265, of Ovid; because some one had assured her, that the round temple, Ovid's 'symbol of the whole earth,' was the building near the Tiber, of which Livy speaks (the round temple of Hercules, in fact), and not the smaller one, which stood between the Capitol and the Palatine, of which much has been by many writers said:—The conservatory of the Holy Fire, with its roof of the bronze of Syracuse, and with the "Paladium Sacra" once guarded within; the one which was burnt by Nero and Commodus, and rebuilt by Vespasian and Septimus again; where at this hour the investigations of the excavators are being carried on with the keenest zest, and where the ancient tales of the vestal maids, to whom Augustus gave the Regia for their own, are being brought one by one by vivid testimony to the light.

Eloquently did Mr. Swinford enlarge on all this, and indisputable was the force of quoted authority he brought to bear, reducing even

Miss Brownrigg at length to complete discomfiture, and driving her to seek dignified retreat.

How they all did amuse Adrian, as, behind the shelter of Mr. Swinford's white head, he ate his solitary dinner.

Ah! he too had been an enthusiast for old stones and their testimony, and that—not so long ago!

CHAPTER V.

PSYCHE, IN A SOUND-WAVE.

NINE o'clock came at last, and still in the same happy frame, still indifferent to ruins and their suggestions, and eagerly sensitive to impressions of a softer kind, he started for his cousin's house. He found his way quickly across the Piazza, not lingering one moment to admire the picturesque aspect of the Spanish Place by moonlight, and taking little heed of the groups of idlers sauntering round the bright-lit doorways of the Alberghi, or of the Forestieri turned out in troops after their *table-d'hôte* dinners, who still sauntered from window to window of the side-pavement of the Piazza, from the end of the Via Babuino

to where the Condotti turned down, just opposite the Barcaccia Fountain.

He hurried across, waiting to admire nothing by the way, and as he went in under the wide archway of the entrance, and passed the *concièrge*, who gave him smiling welcome, and went eagerly up the stone stairs, he was conscious of a sense of keen enjoyment at the prospect of the hour to come.

The shadowy old staircase was carpeted warmly with red drugget, laid down by Lady Daring, immediately on their arrival, when she had set hastily to the work, of making the chill marble interior of an Italian apartment, present an aspect of warmth and home-like comfort, with which to greet her husband, when he came there, fresh from the grace and luxury and the fierce sun-heat of his beautiful residence in the far east.

She and Car had had much to do; and now, from the moment the threshold of the arched portico was crossed, in the ascent of what had been a chill and shadowy staircase, before even passing the special entrance

to the apartment on the first floor, her care and her understanding were quickly recognized in the changed appearance of all there. The warm crimson, which the foot trod, covering the wide steps, with only a border of the white marble showing on each side; the curtains of rich Indian stuffs hanging over the grated windows of each landing; the great vases of Etruscan pottery, filled with ferns and palms and arum lilies, which stood in the corners where the staircase turned; and the soft, warm light that pervaded all, shed from Pompeian lamps placed on brackets in every shadowy crevice and swinging from the centre of the square landing at the top.

There Sir Frederick's native servant was in waiting for Adrian, ready to arrest him on his upward way, and he flung back instantly a heavy *portière* hanging across the door, with many deep salaams; and with the low-murmured request that 'the Sahib would give himself the infinite trouble of entering,' he disclosed beyond the crimson and gold curtain a short narrow corridor, and beyond this,

which Adrian traversed with rapid steps, was an octagon-shaped entrance hall, a diminutive likeness of the tribune of the Uffizi, inlaid with many-coloured stones in ceiling and floor and walls.

The crimson carpeting was carried in a narrowed pathway for the footsteps round here also, and a lamp, like a pink pearl, hanging low in the centre, shed a soft light ; and just below this stood a lovely modern statue of 'Discretion,' which Sir Frederick had bought lately in a famous studio in the Via Nazionale, and which he insinuated that he had chosen as the guardian-angel of his hearth. Lady Daring had placed it here, because the lamp-light, glowing warm through the pink, glass globe hanging from the ceiling above, threw such a full, soft tint of colour on the cold marble, which Sir Frederick said was not correctly "artistic," but which she said she "liked."

There were vases full of lilies, scarlet amaryllis, and snow-white, of the Nile, standing there also, as well as a soft, green fringe of

fern round the statue's base. And the four windows of the octagon room were draped, like the entrance door, and like the barred lattices of the staircase, with curtains of some soft, warm Indian material, in which rich and varied colours were woven and blended together with marvellously good effect.

Through this little octagon hall, after many assiduous attentions from the Hindoo, Adrian passed to an inner corridor, also warmed and draped and carpeted, and pleasantly lit, where he found Lady Daring's English servant, ready to announce him in the conventional way, and a double door was thrown open on each side, which disclosed to him a pleasant, home-like scene.

A large and lofty room, with ceiling curiously painted many centuries ago, with walls lined with soft bright panels of tapestry, which Lady Daring had discovered cleverly to match the ceiling. Four large windows down one side were draped, like all the others, with beautiful stuff brought by her from the east, and a thick warm carpet from Teheran,

covered the marble floor from end to end ; it was a beautiful piece of wonderful colour in itself, and a charming foundation on which to work, in grouping things for use and ornament all over the large room. The room was not over-furnished, and not very full, for Sir Frederick liked space around him, and was much prone to movement. But what there was, Lady Daring had placed well. The vast length and breadth of the apartment was broken in several places by folding-screens, in the corners of which small tables stood, covered with countless little things of use and beauty, and flanked each by low easy-chairs ; cosy nooks and corners these, of which each of that home-party had their especial one—where each read in solitude, if it so pleased them, at their own particular shaded lamp, or to which they retired for *tête-à-tête*, two of them together often, or sometimes with some especial friend. For many came in of an evening, during that bright Roman winter, for an hour of pleasant converse at the Casa Pia.

Many came—few indeed who were invited ever failed to come—for there was so much to draw them to that beautiful *salon*, where the charm and talent of that home-group of three made the hours pass delightfully for visitors of many varied tastes.

There was taste and knowledge in everything Lady Daring touched, and she was also an ardent collector of many kinds of things.

Sir Frederick was rich, and he had complete confidence in his wife's taste (notwithstanding the pink lamp above the head of Discretion), and he had most unbounded satisfaction in her talents; so he never restrained her when she professed to have discovered anything that it was worth while to buy.

Some day they hoped to make together a home in England, where all the trophies of their years of travel and exile would be placed at last, to form a beautiful museum of European and Asiatic treasures. And meanwhile, here at Rome, they had gone on buying much; and Lady Daring had not spared

herself the trouble of unpacking those Indian draperies and rich, embroidered stuffs, nor the Teheran carpet either, which she had stopped on its way to England indeed, in order to embellish and make luxurious—for her husband's passing resting-time—this his Roman home.

The result was beautiful, if a little '*bizarre*,' as Sir Frederick laughingly pronounced it all, when he had first arrived; and if it had been so then, it was now ten times more *bizarre*. For in the great *salon* there was scattered upon every available standing-place *bric-à-brac* of every description, and castes of *intagli* and *impronti* work; and there were statuettes, too—copies of the antique as well as charming little things, quite original and found often in some studio as yet but little known. There were copies also of some of the great pictures leaning upon tall easels, or standing upon the little tables below the soft lamplight; in fact, every kind of thing; and, amidst it all, Lady Daring's pleasant, English-looking tea-table, behind which she sat,

when Adrian entered, ensconced in her own especial nook.

It was not far from the piano, very near to which, Car was seated, in a low chair, talking, or listening rather, to Sir Frederick, who was narrating his day's adventures, in return for all they had just told him of theirs.

Sir Frederick sat near the great high Italian stove, with its carved façade of marble, and its decorations of beautiful fruit and flowers.

He sat back in a long, low chair, close to the corner of the stove, which stood at the further end of the long room, from where Adrian entered.

He had set wide open the two sides of the burnished door of the stove, and a bright fire of logs, piled high, blazed within for his evident comfort and satisfaction. He sat reclining low in his huge chair, his head thrown back with an indolent aspect of complete abandonment to an absolute luxury of repose, as Adrian crossed the threshold of the door and first discerned him.

But he had sprung to his feet with an active energy, ready and alert, in curious contrast to his reposeful attitude, before Adrian had come three paces into the room, and Sir Frederick was the first to give him greeting.

“My dear fellow, I am so glad to see you,” he said, and he advanced with both hands extended. He had pleasant recollections of Adrian, and of that summer by the river-side, when he himself—the father’s friend, and twenty-five years the senior of Adrian and of that other young man who arrived in the boat, rowing from Oxford, on that July night—had carried off with him, when he returned to India, the one who had been his choice of the two sisters, little recking of all that in that summer time had been ; and he retained little more than a vague, pleasant remembrance of those two young boating-men.

And of Cecilia—of the hidden heart’s history of that sweet sister of his own bright Vere—who, as the wife of the chief commissioner of his Indian presidency, had fallen so easy a prey to a slight touch of fever out

there so many years ago, Sir Frederick had heard little at any time, and had long ago forgotten what he had been told. So his recollections of Adrian Dillon were all agreeable, and he received him with cordiality now.

How pleasant was the whole scene and its surroundings ; how attractive and home-like ! How beautiful in its reposeful dignity, its size, its luxury, its richness of soft, mingling colour was the room ; and how entirely belonging to it they all looked—Sir Frederick himself, as much as any of them.

He had worn well, and carried his years with grace and lightness. He was a tall, striking-looking man, and though his smooth, close-cut hair was quite white, with streaks of glistening silver where it swept back from his spare temples, and his long moustache was of the same snowy hue, this was the only evidence of his sixty-five years, or of his long and arduous service.

He wore no beard, only that drooping moustache, which hung long and low in stiff

points, leaving all the rest of his strong and handsome face uncovered, revealing a firm chin, with a delicate cleft, like Car's, in the centre.

He had a great deal of the manner of 'his Excellency' still—grown over him by long use and habit, and coming out curiously and often, to his wife's amusement, when he received in his Roman rooms. It was merely a habit, for in reality, in his own character and among all those with whom he could be 'at home,' he was an exceedingly pleasing man, utterly unpretentious and unaffected, and charming easily, with ready social talent and much intellectual and artistic grace.

Near his great chair, where he had been lounging at ease while he talked to Car, stood an easel supporting a large portfolio of his drawings; and many others, with sketch-books and colour-boxes, lay round him, on divers kinds of tables, in this his particular part of the room.

Lady Daring looked charming behind her tea-table in what she would have called a

"tea-gown," a lovely arrangement of pale, violet-grey velvet and old Venetian lace, intended for the seclusion of her home circle on quiet evenings like this.

And Car?—Car, seen now by Adrian's eager eyes, turned for her contemplation as soon as Sir Frederick's greeting had been received; seen for the first time in evening-dress, without even the smallest lace covering on her graceful head, sitting there under the soft lamplight, by the corner of her piano—was indeed bewitching, to the love-glamoured eyes of Adrian, at all events.

She had certainly a very prettily-shaped head—love had not blinded correct judgment there; and the gold-brown hair waved backwards from the downy cloud that fringed her forehead into a knot of great silky coils behind, worn low, as some people still wore their hair that winter, although many had raked it high.

From the fringe of the brown cloud in front small silky rings strayed down over her temples, and curled softly round her low

forehead. She wore a cream-hued dress again this evening—it was evidently a favourite colour ; but this was of an exquisitely delicate Indian gauze, which her father had just brought home for her, and upon the shoulders it was turned back with lace, and cut just a little open for the evening, allowing the smooth, white pillar of her lovely throat to rise free and untrammelled. It supported her head, as does the lily-stem the flower, with a certain little stateliness of grace, which was inseparable from her. A single row of small Roman pearls encircled her throat, and she wore also this evening small, star-shaped earrings of pearls.

Adrian noted and remembered everything—every detail of her dress ; and the scent of the bunch of sweet narcissus, which nestled close among the laces about her neck, remained with him always, when he thought of that evening, and whenever he recalled it again.

She was at work on a piece of lovely embroidery as she sat there, listening to her

father's pleasant fireside converse this evening, working a wonderful device in silks of every sort of soft hue upon a width of pale, golden satin, and copying her pattern from a piece of old Italian church work, which her mother had found for her in one of her favourite curio shops. It hung from the table by her side, with a book placed on one end, to keep it there—an open book, from which she had been reading until her father came in from the dining-room, to talk. The piece of beautiful, old, embroidered satin made a fine bit of warm colour in contrast to her soft-hued dress as she bent her head over it continually, to follow the intricacies of the woven device as she copied.

When Adrian passed on, from exchanging his greeting with her father, she looked up for a moment, and brightly smiled her welcome. Then she paused in her work, and laid it down, with both her hands resting on the golden satin among her bundle of mingling, delicate-coloured silks, and then she put up her left hand with an easy, familiar

gesture of kindness towards him, and let him clasp it for an instant in his. Just then Lady Daring claimed his notice, for he had passed rapidly on from father to daughter, and had not reached her special corner yet.

“Here you are,” she said. “I am so glad. We have been telling Frederick all about you, and about our drive together; and is not this comfortable and home-like, having an English cup of tea? We always have it everywhere, wherever we are. And now you take that huge chair there between us all, and let us be happy and sociable, for we have told them to say ‘not at home’ to every one else this evening, that we may have a nice quiet talk quite alone with you. For we want to hear all about you, Adrian, and Car shall play to you, and Frederick shall show you all his Roman sketches, so I hope you will not be dull.”

He laughed a low, joyous laugh in answer to her last words, as he took his place where she invited him, in a large chair near the stove-corner, facing Sir Frederick, but on

the opposite side from him, and not very far from the low seat near the grand piano, where the old Italian embroidery hung from the little round table, and where Car sat and copied it.

"It is a very great pleasure, Sir Frederick, to see you in Europe again."

"And a very great pleasure to be here, I can assure you," the other replied, "though it is only for a short period of *relâche*. Things are in a difficult state in my far eastern district, Dillon, I can tell you, and I must soon hurry back; but meanwhile I am enjoying myself like a school-boy at play."

"I have no doubt of it," said Adrian.

"Yes, father," said Car, looking up at him with a quick, soft glance, "I always think it is worth while working as hard as you do, to enjoy a holiday as thoroughly as you do yours."

"It is," he answered; "I do enjoy it. And you, Dillon? you only arrived to-day at Rome?"

"This morning," he replied.

"Well, it is a glorious experience in its way. What will be your line here, now? Let me see—of course—yes—Egypt. Why, Arbuthnot, a civilian whom I met in Calcutta two or three years ago, told me, that you are the first authority that they have got at the society in these days on the demotic and the hieroglyphics, so, of course, the Egyptian trophies of Hadrian and Augustus will be your especial line."

"Yes, that was what originally brought me," said Adrian, with a slight return to the dryness, which had become encrusted for so long over his mind and manner while he conned those inscriptions of his choice, a dryness that had somehow abandonéd him on this golden day, since a very early morning hour. This manner gave place to a touch of pathos now, as it occurred to him that after all 'yes'—this *was* his line, and that he had almost forgotten it!

"Well," Sir Frederick went on, "I have sketched a good many of the obelisks, and I have done the *soi-disant* pyramids, too."

"There is only one pyramid here, as far as I know," said Adrian, bound to accuracy, in all its dryness, if the subject was driven upon him; "the Caius Cestius, as it is supposed; it is not really Egyptian—but," he continued, with a brightening of the eyes, and an expression of keen feeling coming into them suddenly, "I know where it stands, though I have not found my way there yet."

"Oh!" began Car, with her quick, little, hesitating sigh, "I know too, where that is, and it is one of the very particular places I want to take you to see—that you must go to in the pilgrimage, you know, that we spoke of this afternoon."

"I meant to hunt up a Shelley at that book-shop at the corner—"

"Yes, Piale's," said Car eagerly.

"And I proposed to myself to look out the route in 'Adonais,' and to find my way as it is described for us there."

"What—straight to Caius Cestius?" said Lady Daring, quoting—

“ ‘Pass, till the spirit of the spot shall lead
Thy footsteps to a slope of green access,
Where, like an infant’s smile, over the dead
A light of laughing flowers along the grass is spread.’ ”—

“ Yes, just from those very lines, and from the page just coming before, and from the stanza just following them, one should be able to find the resting-place of Keats without much fear of error, and the —

‘Pyramid with wedge sublime,
Like flame transform’d to marble ;’—

also.”

“ Oh, do let us go,” murmured Car.

“ I will certainly wait until you can take me, if you really will,” he said.

“ So that is something else,” she answered, with a bright, satisfied smile. “ Oh, I think we shall show you everything in time.”

Lady Daring was smiling softly across her tea-table at him, with some unuttered feeling in her glance.

“ Oh, Adrian,” she said presently, “ I remember how Shelley-mad you were, and your poor friend, too.”

"You are kind in your remembrance," he answered courteously, but he said no more.

"But, Frederick," continued Lady Daring, "have you not a drawing of the pyramid of Cestius in that last Roman portfolio?"

"I have," her husband replied.

"Well, but do show it to Adrian, it will interest him; and show him all your charming sepia drawings of the ruins, my dear. I know they are just what he would admire; they are so exact."

"So matter-of-fact, perhaps you mean to express politely?" said Sir Frederick pleasantly, smiling across at her as he turned and stretched out his hand towards a small portfolio that leant against the wall near his chair. "I know you think this sort of work uninteresting and matter-of-fact, Vere, and perhaps Dillon will not care about it either."

"I am sure I shall," exclaimed Adrian, "especially, I imagine, if the drawings be really matter-of-fact. My line lies all that

way," he added, glancing with a low laugh towards Car, who inclined her head a little to one side for a moment at this remark, and steadily contemplated her work with a dubious smile.

"Really quite nonsense, however, all the same," said Lady Daring; "very matter-of-fact, indeed, the man must be, who even now, Adrian, when the ardour of youth cannot be made a plea, proposes to himself a pilgrimage to the shrine of Keats and Shelley, with Adonais as his guide."

"Even at our extremely advanced age, Vere," replied her cousin, with a touch of cynicism and bitterness, even annoyance in his tone, at the particular turn she had given to her last remark, "even now we cling to some lingering illusions of our youth."

"We do," she replied emphatically, but there was a slight reflection of his annoyance in her tone now also, as he had turned the shaft upon her a little, and included the flight of her youth in the implied regret for his own.

It is true, no one could have borne better the unwelcome fact implied than she could, still blooming and beautiful as she was ; and as she looked this evening in her pearl-grey velvet and Venetian lace. She neither felt, nor looked, nor was old. But then neither was he, and so Car thought most certainly, as she looked with soft admiration at her mother, and then let her calm bright eyes rest a moment, with that critical expression once more returned to them, upon Adrian, too. He was of her mother's generation, but, no more than her mother, did he evince anything of the loss of youth. Tall, strong, and graceful, from his perfect simplicity and ease of gesture and attitude ; she pronounced him tacitly, within her own young judgment, to be her ideal of heroic vigour and manly force ; worthy to stand there by her own handsome father, she thought ; his equal in address, in appearance, in demeanour, in every respect. And he was the very first man of whom she had ever held this particular opinion, since she had been taken

away and banished from that adored and charming father, when they reluctantly sent her from them at Calcutta ten years ago. Now she thought she liked to see him this evening with Adrian, the two standing presently side by side.

Sir Frederick rose to exhibit his drawings, and Adrian came forward to inspect. They leant the portfolio against a tall picture-stand, which Sir Frederick wheeled forward to the light, and then saying, "This is the matter-of-fact collection then first, as you know." He drew forth a bunch of drawings from the portfolio's depths, and spread them before Adrian on the low, round, small table by Car's chair.

She laid down her work, and turned with alacrity to join in the inspection, as Sir Frederick took them up again one by one.

They were not matter-of-fact by any means, but they *were* exact. He had many portfolios full of water-colours, many of them of gorgeous Indian scenery, of re-

splendent colour and brilliant effect, and he had done also many charming paintings since he had been at Rome; but this collection was of another kind.

Sir Frederick had been an engineer officer at an early period of his life, and had taken high honours for professional drawings in every branch, and through all his after-years he had especially enjoyed making studies, in outline or sepia, of architecture and stonework, exact as his engineering designs. He had grand studies of this kind of the Indian temples and gigantic Indian ruins, and of Egyptian and Assyrian wonders, that would all be exhibited, to edify Adrian, in course of time, and here in Rome he had achieved a remarkable collection during the last two months. Ruins, temples, arches, numbers of those glorious visible relics of that glorious, long-lost past, were here drawn by him with a wonderful perfection in outline, with a softness of shadow and a clearness of light—which were all in their way artistically beautiful, and

interesting, as Roman mementos, to a high degree.

There was the pyramid of Caius Cestius, of which they had talked, drawn in clear outline, casting a sharp shadow on the 'green acre' of Endymion's poet, the smooth marble of its tapering structure, with its basement of Travertine, shaded effectively in soft sepia-grey. There was the beautiful arched façade of the Porta Maggiore; there was the ruin of the villa of Mæcenæ; there were the towers flanking the circus of Maxentius; there was the round temple of Hercules, near that other of patrician virtue; there was the Tarpeian rock, with the *centum gradus* by which the Vitellians climbed when they took the citadel. There were the baths of Agrippa, that scrap of rugged ruin built into the dwellings of modern Rome. There was the obelisk resting on Bernini's elephant, and how many more!—the Colosseum in every point of view; the arches of Constantine, Titus, and Severus; the Meta-Sudans, with the basilica of the forum of Cupid beyond; the grotto of the

fountains of Egeria in the Almo Valley ;—so many points of interest, each bringing up something (as they turned them over) to be remembered, to be quoted, to be said, and all drawn with that wonderful perfection of outline for which Sir Frederick's able work was always renowned, and shaded with soft sepia in that particular style of artistic beauty which he had made his own. Finally, as the last of the collection, and the one on which he had been working that very day, they came to a remarkable drawing, beautiful in shadow and detail ; a great rugged circular tower, with castellated balustrade, jagged and broken, but still traceable round its summit, and with the arched ruins of a Gothic church standing near.

“What is this ?” exclaimed Adrian.

“Ah, father, that is what you have just finished—my tomb !” Car laughingly said to him. “You know,” she added, softly smiling up at Adrian as she spoke, “you know—I am ‘Cecilia,’ too !”

Sir Frederick was holding his drawing

extended in one hand, and was examining it afresh, with keen doubtful criticism, and with half-closed eyes.

“Do you not know it, Dillon?” he said, and added, quoting, as he had already done many times from many sources, modern and classical, during their inspection of his work, “do you not recognize—

“‘What was this tower of strength? within its cave
What treasure lay so lock’d, so hid?—a woman’s
grave.’”

“Is it really?” Adrian answered in a strangely altered voice, and taking the drawing from Sir Frederick’s hand. “Is it Cecilia Metella? How extraordinary!—this is really what Plutarch describes to us, what Lucius Cornelius Sylla built.”

“That is really what Byron describes to us,” responded Sir Frederick, “and with much more fetching effect than Plutarch, too; but the sarcophagus is there no longer. It was moved to the Farnese Museum ever so long ago.”

“Cecilia Metella,” murmured Adrian low, and then he turned to Lady Daring, with the drawing still in his hand, and with a deep flush sweeping suddenly across his brow. “Do you know, that twenty years ago I used to think of this thing, and I wrote a poem on it and its unravelled mystery, because in my youthful arrogance I thought Byron had failed to do full justice to the loved one, so mourned, so honoured, so unknown.”

“Cool of you!” laughed Sir Frederick, “especially as I think that sudden burst of sentiment over that rugged, round, old tower—

““Standing with half its battlements alone,
And with two thousand years of ivy grown,
The garland of eternity, where wave
The green leaves over all—by time o’erthrown’—

is as fine a peroration as Byron has written over any corner of Rome, excepting always the Gladiator—he never dreamt, nor wrote, a grander stanza than that. But in his Italian pilgrimage I think ‘Cecilia Metella’ comes next.”

"So do I," said Lady Daring, for she had a charming way of nearly always agreeing with, and echoing Sir Frederick on subjects like this; a way that naturally always delighted him, and impressed him afresh with her bright intelligence and good taste. "I am sure your poem was lovely, Adrian, and some day you must read it to me; you know how more than interesting it would be to me; and you are right, dear Frederick, the Gladiator is simply perfection, and, by-the-bye, Adrian must see it in the Capitol, with the Faun and many other things; and the stanzas on that old tower of yours are beautiful, as you say, Frederick—indeed, so is all Childe Harold in Italy, only I do just think that Byron need *not* have made that faint insinuation against Cecilia Metella's character; for, you see, no one could contradict it, or say for certain what she may or may not have been, and, at all events, *he* could not know."

"He only raises a query where all is conjecture, my dear."

"Yes, and that is just what is so unpardonable in him, a query to which he could never give an assuring reply. I know it affects me, Frederick. I somehow never have felt satisfied about her since I read the lines,—"

"Where would conjecture stray?" answered Sir Frederick, still quoting, as he gathered up his drawings,—

"This much alone we know—Metella died,
The wealthiest Roman's wife: Behold his love—or
pride!"

At all events, it is about the most interesting tomb-ruin here, to my mind; unless perhaps the baker's, outside the Porta Maggiore, on the Via Labicana. I am going to draw that next; you remember about it, I dare say, Dillon," he went on, "the tomb of Euryaces, the baker, discovered close to the Claudian aqueduct, embedded in the wall of Honorius? In the Uffizi at Florence they had an ancient drawing of it by Baldassarre Peruzzi, or De Sangallo, so they knew it

must be somewhere thereabouts long before it was found. It is tremendously interesting as a monument of domestic manners and ideas ; you must come and see it."

"Yes, yes," exclaimed Lady Daring, "Adrian shall go—he shall go everywhere along all our respective lines of taste, or he will persuade us to *think* he goes in his pleasant way ; but for the moment, dear Frederick, do you not think we have had just enough of tombs ? Shall we let the baker and his family and his *panarium* rest in peace, while Car plays to us for a little while ?"

"By all means," Sir Frederick exclaimed ; "you are never very fond of ruins in the cool, critical light of positive evidences, Vere, and no doubt you have had enough of it all now ; too much, I dare say."

"Never too much of your drawings, Frederick, nor of your own notes thereon. Come ! I only once complained, dear, only once—and that was the night you brought Mr. Swinford from the Paris to dine with us, and he was the whole evening long so 'exceeding fierce

among the tombs,' even you said so, you know you did."

"I remember," he said, laughing; and Adrian put in,—

"Swinford! Oh, that's my own particular clergyman at my *table-d'hôte*. Oh, he is splendid when once he breaks away. Fierce! indeed, you may well say so. I wish you had heard him discomfit the whole phalanx of the international dinner-table to-night on the real temple of the Vestals, against some one's false opinion concerning another one."

"Did he now? Capital!" exclaimed Sir Frederick, delighted at the idea. "Did he indeed? I believe it—he is tremendous in the classics. I wish I had heard him."

"I can assure you," said Adrian, "it was very fine."

"It must have been; but you know, Dillon, it's all very well for Vere to pooh-pooh us, but there are quantities of places which a scholar like you must really see. I will take a few turns round with you myself, if you

like, and give up the drawing for some afternoons."

"Thank you, oh—thank you," Adrian answered, but there was a certain doubtful ring in the accents of his gratitude.

"I will," reiterated Sir Frederick with enthusiasm.

"But he is to go everywhere with all of us," persisted Lady Daring, while Car looked up from her work with a slight flush mounting to her cheek now, and a deprecating, protesting expression coming into her eyes. There was the pilgrimage! Had Adrian forgotten that? The pilgrimage which they were to make to all her favourite shrines. If her father carried him off, and absorbed him in ruins, she thought she 'knew how it would be.' But she might have trusted Adrian. He had a cool quiet way of doing, against everything in the long-run, just the thing that pleased him best.

"It is all very well, though," Sir Frederick went on again, as he stood in a corner of the room, with his back to them, blissfully uncon-

scious of all interchanges of looks, dubious, protesting, or otherwise, and intent on putting away his drawings with elaborate care, "it is all very well, but it is barbarous, Vere, if you prevent him seeing things. He must do all the tombs, you know, and we must take him into the catacombs."

"We!" exclaimed Lady Daring. "No, Frederick, if that is going to be exclusively your line, then you must take Adrian under your wing, and carry him off in your own way, for if there is one thing I cannot stand, it is that continual visitation of the catacombs which you delight in—and yes, there is one step still worse, and that is the Capucine monks!"

"Oh! he must see *them*, of course," said Sir Frederick, turning round with one of his quick emphatic gestures from his portfolio. "But there is time for everything, and now certainly is the time for music. Cara, carissima mia, I have opened your piano," and he raised the heavy lid of the 'Pleyel' as he spoke, and turned towards Car, with a bright smile and much chivalrous grace.

She was so charming to him, and so perfectly in harmony with his most fastidious taste, this stately young daughter of his, she who had made, for the three months of his repose, the star-like glory of his Roman home. He was never tired of admiring her, in her likeness, and in her contrast to her mother. And he never abated the enthusiasm of his chivalrous attention to her, nor any of those *petits soins* which are so instinctive and become so natural to men, who live much in a world, where women are dependent upon constant thought for them, and on this excessive care. He thought her a delicate, precious thing, to be cherished delicately, and his pretty graceful ways with her were very charming indeed. And, much as he admired his wife's fine style of beauty, and as he loved the deep lustre of her dark eyes, he admired Car none the less because she differed, and because, with her mother's height and carriage, she had the brown-gold hair of his own family, and the true Daring eyes, 'thrown down to her,' as he used

proudly to say, 'from the walls of the lovely old home of his ancestors in Hampshire, by stately dames of the house of Daring, who looked out from the canvas of Lely, Gainsborough, and Reynolds with just such eyes.'

As the crown of all her charms for him, her music was his great delight. He loved it, and it soothed many an hour of rest for him during these months, as he sat yielding by force of need to that languor of fatigue and overstrain, which often possessed him at this time.

His eager frame had been overtaxed in many ways, his quick, keen brain overworked repose was difficult to him, and Car's music helped him farther towards it, than anything else he knew. Eagerly he turned now, and gathered up the bright silks that lay about her, and she rose, pleased to please him, as she ever was ; and Adrian stood back a step as she swept her long, soft, gauzy skirt past him towards her piano.

She took her place, and Sir Frederick paused a moment near her.

"What," she said, hesitating, and looking up at him with a sweet gleam in her eyes, as he stood close by her side, "what will you have?" Her white fingers rested in hesitation now upon the keys.

"What you will, my Pearl," he answered, with the echo of a deep tenderness in his voice. "What you will; you cannot mistake." And then he smiled pleasantly at her, and nodded in his quick, bright way, and turned away then, and left her to herself, and to the inspiration of the genius which he knew would come.

He walked across the room, and signed to Adrian to come to him, as he pushed back one of the Indian curtains, and showed a door beyond.

"One moment, Car; pardon," he called to her. "Dillon, is not this in your line?" and he disclosed the vista of a small room leading out from the large drawing-room, in which was displayed every luxury and attraction possible to a smoking-room or to a 'divan,' as by Lady Daring it was generally

called. A centre of the Casa Pia this, on which she had expended the utmost energy of her devisive power and forethought, before her husband arrived.

It was lit up, and looked seductive and inviting enough; but Sir Frederick only passed in for a moment, and returned again. He and his most socially disposed lady had been too long in the east, and too continually together in their exiled life, to cherish any lingering western prejudices as to limit in the range of those floating vapours emitted by Sir Frederick's latakia; and so back he came now, with cigarettes in one hand, and a small Etruscan lamp in the other. Etruscan in original design at least, in reality a copy made by a skilled 'orefice' at Genoa, under Lady Daring's own direction. It was an adaptation, conceived by herself during a few days she had spent at Genoa, of the graceful Etruscan form to the purpose of a light always ready on the table of the divan for Sir Frederick's cigar. She had had it made as a Christmas present for him. He was de-

lighted with it, and as he went continually from room to room from the divan to his studio, from the studio to her boudoir, from there to Car's little room and then back into the large *salon* again, he was always carrying the lamp about with him, until Lady Daring said she regretted much having given it to him, as he 'was certain to set somebody eventually on fire.' As yet he had not done so however, and still the little gilt lamp travelled here and there, and he set it on the low table by his own chair now.

"A cigarette?—Turkish; I think they are good," he said to Adrian, extending to him a little Benares tray on which his cigars for the evening were piled. "You will have one? Oh, do! Do not be nervous about the hangings of Vere's rooms; they are well-seasoned, and neither she nor Car mind in the very least, do you, Vere?"

Lady Daring smiled, and nodded her assent to his words; and Sir Frederick, after holding his cigar-tip to the little lamp-light till

it glowed in a tiny star, extended his long, spare figure in the depths of his great chair, and yielded himself up to complete repose. And Adrian, taking a cigarette also, and lighting it, as his host had requested, and because it was friendly and more sociable so to do, forgot instantly all about it again, as he slowly drew nearer and nearer to the piano, and leant against a tall, old marqueterie cabinet by Car's side.

And so the evening was closed in for him; so the picture and the memory were made complete. As silence fell upon the large beautiful room, dimly illuminated, full of rich colouring and deep shadows, like an interior of Rembrandt's; as Sir Frederick's latakia rose in feathery clouds, floated across the light, and was lost in the dim shadows, diffusing a faint, sweet odour on its way; as Lady Daring moved slowly forward and took a low seat a little distant, but in view of the piano—and gave herself up, to the dreamy enjoyment of this musical repose, which to her also was very sympathetic at times; and

as now, from beneath the touch of those white, delicate fingers, on which Adrian rested his eager eyes, there stole forth music, lovely and full of subtle bewitchment, and marvellously varied too; like the dance and rush and ripple, and the wave and fall and flow, of those sun-kissed and storm-tossed waters of Undine's enchanted stream. Now liquid, rapid, and restless; now soft and flowing; now rising, in a passionate wave, to power and fervour, and sinking, with ineffable sweetness of harmonious pathos, almost to silence again. It was very wonderful to him, and he felt it to the very innermost heart-spring of his deepest being.

It made him still, and almost stern, from intense emotion, as the passionate strain swept on and on; until he stood, with gaze lowered at length, even from her, to the ground at his own feet, while his eyelids fell heavily, and their dark fringe lay almost upon his cheek; and his head bent with a sort of intense reverence which stirred him, as even the 'soul of his soul' (as Dante puts it)

was reached at last, and he touched that joy ineffable, which art in all its great expressions can bring to us. All art indeed, but none in form so strong and pure, as that which echoes the unexplained and spontaneous breathings of immortality within us, and bears us with strong bright wings on high; as Schiller felt and described once, 'Swung by the might of music up to the spirit-land.' She played great things and bright things, and sweet things and dreamful things, one after another in succession, losing herself and carrying them with her through the enchantment of her tangled musical maze, and finding her way out again, and rising at the last, to that fervour and intensity of power and sweet pathos with which she so swayed and affected him towards the end.

"Very charming, my love," her mother said, as she paused, and as a murmur of satisfaction came from the depths of Sir Frederick's great chair, "very charming. But, dear me," she added, as she glanced at Adrian's stern and quivering face, "you have

solemnized us all too much, I declare. *Qu'il est sensible,*" she murmured to herself then, as she contemplated him for a moment, and her *sotto voce* reflections floated on. "And how picturesque he looks, against that huge *rococo* cabinet in the shadow there, trying to *pose* as if he were adamant, and could not feel. But all the same, I fear, Car has conjured up poor Cecilia Metella with a vengeance, indeed. What is to be done?" And she continued aloud, "Adrian, why do you not make yourself comfortable, and smoke?"

"I am very comfortable," he answered, rousing himself with a strong effort, and biting his underlip impetuously beneath his bronze moustache—for the struggle for self-control was hard.

"I am sure you cannot be comfortable in that black corner there," and she laughed in a pleasant, reassuring way, and smiled across at him, indicating a low, luxurious seat for his benefit, that stood between the piano and herself.

And Car gathered up her small posses-

sions, handkerchiefs, gold bangles, and big rings, which she had taken off and laid on the desk, and she prepared to rise and close her piano.

But Sir Frederick suddenly spoke. He was not satisfied—he had not had quite music enough; his cigarette was glowing still.

“Before you leave the piano, one more, Car,” he said. “My favourite; you know, the one with the mythological name.”

“Oh, he means Tito Mattei, the ‘Psyche,’ dear; oh, yes, do! it is charming, and only a little, pretty thing! She had some lessons from Mattei, Adrian, and he gave her this himself.”

Once more the notes awoke beneath her touch, and now, in a bright rippling stream, like the soft shaking of a bunch of pearl-strings, held absently, as it might be, and danced with slow, unconscious rhythm by a Roman girl, such as one sees in the Via Condotti behind the windows of a pearl fabbrica, singing to herself in a low tone, and dreaming sweet, wandering, wistful dreams, as she passes the sunny hours away, and as she

dances her pearly wares for very idleness in her small brown hands.

And this was the musical lyric which he heard last that evening ; and it was the one that stayed with him, echoing its sweet rhythm within his heart, and mingling its strains always ; with the scent of narcissus and of fragrant and very delicate latakia, and making part for ever with all the precious and perfect memories of that night.

The night was far on its way when at length Sir Frederick parted with him, after several friendly cigarettes, and he went out across the Piazza once more.

The scene had changed again since he had traversed it at nine o'clock. Then, all was still full of life and brightness, crowds standing idly about on all sides in the gay light of the shop-windows and of the hotels. Now, all was still and solitary, even the great doors of the Alberghi swung to, and only the night-porters' faint gleams illuminating their little windows. The seller and the buyer alike had

disappeared long hours ago from the shops, and the treasures of the Piazza's art-commerce were veiled and curtained carefully away.

The beggar followers of old King Peppo had all deserted the Spanish Steps, all crept away into heaven knows what fearsome crannies and corners of the old ruins, into the cellars and attics of the Ghetto, or the low-lying parts of the Trastevere by the river-side. In the sunlight life was easy for them, but they vanished before the chill lustre of the winter-moon.

The flower-sellers, too—the donkey-cart with the pretty Bambino among them—had driven back to their little garden-home in the Campagna, and all the other vendors of the midday street were gone. Even the noisy, busy traffic was at rest; only a distant roll broke the silence occasionally, of a carriage, returning from late ball or reception, rumbling beneath the *porte-cochère* of a palazzo, or hurrying along some distant street.

Intense silence reigned; the air was cool

and clear, the moon-rays white and radiant, filling the Piazza with a cold lustre, that was quite mystical and Dantesque; for it was indeed like the atmosphere and colouring of some weird and silver-lit spirit-sphere. Clear-cut shadows fell dark across the whiteness of the earth from the tall houses, from the obelisk at the end of the Piazza, and even from the light spray of the fount. And as Adrian, drawn by a strong attraction to this last point, looked down into the water in the great marble bark, he saw that the moon-rays pierced deep into its hidden depths, and made the little bubbles on its surface, and the ripple of the wavy currents caused by the fountain's fall, glisten like the dew of hoar-frost beneath the sun.

It was wonderful; it was beautiful; it was weird, out there in the deserted Piazza at this midnight hour, for it was indeed nearly twelve o'clock.

It was chill and very dangerous too, only this he had forgotten, if he had ever known it. He drew his light overcoat around him,

obeyed his impulse, and just where he had rested at that morning hour, and seen Her come down those Spanish Steps and buy her scarlet lilies, he rested again now, and looked round, and up the stairs' steep height and above their summit, to where the tower of the Trinità dei Monti and the obelisk rose ; and beyond them again, towards the dark-blue, cloudless sky, that stretched such a veil of wonder above the sleeping city.

The moon sailed there in that mighty silence, rivalling indeed, in the radiance of her white, silver glory, the golden monarch of the day ; and around her, stretching across the heavens in countless array, was all that wondrous star-realm of hers, where she reigns, to our finite vision, pre-eminent and moves supreme ; all were marshalled in their places, her subjects and her trains of honour—constellations, planets, spheres ; all pulsing and throbbing, as they do always pulse and throb, as if with some ineffable star-life of their own, in those glowing southern climes, and all shedding forth that wondrous electric current

of subtle magnetism which reaches this world of ours, as we gaze up and meet these orbs of fire and light, and feel that they quicken and enthrall us, sometimes with an awful sense of their magnitude and of our nothingness, and sometimes with a thrill of infinite sweetness, as beneath the gaze of eyes—we have loved.

Adrian rested alone there by the bark-fountain, and his passionate eyes searched the midnight sky. Many a time had that same sweet thought possessed him in the years that were gone; many a night from out the murky northern sky had his Cecilia Metella, lost and dear, looked forth for him in these pulsing orbs of light; and now did she see, as before? And was it joy, in the tranquil radiance of the starry spheres, for her, to know of him, that life had come to him again; that his soul was aroused from its long and morbid torpor; that it was alive and full of radiance again; that a thrill of passionate hope was vibrating anew in his heart now; and that the sweet magnetic

currents of strong affinity were once again quickening his whole being ; as on that summer night, when, far away in their homeland, by the rushing river, in their eager and passionate youth, they two had looked each other deep in the eyes, and known, with quick, mutual glance of recognition, that, as they met—they loved ?

Now, it was so again ; and in those starry spheres Cecilia Metella seemed bending above his head with peace ; and the tale was told to her (in that deep confidence of which we know in our souls), of this strong young love, which had reached his vigorous manhood since the sun rose golden on the domes and arches of this city of all history, before the gaze of his weary eyes that day.

All dulness, all dreariness, all solitude, were gone from him ; he loved.

He told the stars he loved. He breathed it to the still, deep night ; he whispered it to the tender Spirit of that long ago ; and he questioned not, of the whole future before him, concerning anything at all. He asked

his heart nothing of what the future might bring. He loved ! And life was strong again within him, and warm and keen ; and a great gladness, as of some strange and wondrous glory, possessed and overpowered him.

He looked down from the radiant heavens at length, and hid his face with his strong, nervous hands. He covered his burning eyes, and he sat still a moment, drinking deep into the well of gladness that sprang up fresh and beautiful within him as he welcomed back—the eagerness, and the passion, and all the lost joy of life !

Just then, a bell chimed through the silence, from afar across Tiber, the midnight hour ; and then it was answered by another near at hand ; then the Trinità dei Monti echoed the chime high above his head, and then another, and another, till the sky was full of their music, and the air seemed to throb with the sound. And a midnight peal rang out from the great tower of St. Angelo, and every corner of the great sleeping city vibrated with countless echoes of the hour.

Psyche, in a Sound-Wave. 163

The day was over. His first Roman day of love, or the redawn of love. He must go forth, strong and hopeful, to greet the morrow.

CHAPTER VI.

CECILIA METELLA—CECILIA CARA.

BEFORE Sir Frederick had parted with Adrian Dillon it had been arranged that the next afternoon should be spent by them together. And it had been further decided, that the tomb of the baker Eurysaces, should still remain unvisited for another day, because Sir Frederick remembered that the Fountain of Egeria, in the Vale of Almo, which he had already drawn, was the wrong one (speaking classically), although it was Byron's—

“Egeria ! sweet creation of some heart !”

It was that “young Aurora of the air,” the nymph of Venus, to whom Byron has given in these later days such fresh immor-

tality indeed ; but the wrong one still, according to every credible authority, and not really the “Fons Perennis Aquæ” of Livy at all. That lies beyond the Porta Capena, under the Cœlian Hill, where Juvenal saw it, upon the site of the grove of the Camænæ, and where it is now enclosed in the charming grounds of the Villa Mattei.

Sir Frederick recollected that he had a special permit to visit this scene on the morrow, and he proposed that Dillon should share the privilege with him.

Adrian, while he went through his morning’s explorations—made in something of his own especial line—doubted greatly within himself as to the merits of this privilege, until luncheon-time, when he received a small note from his charming and most kindly-disposed cousin, who, while she reminded him of his engagement with Sir Frederick, made him supremely happy by the addenda, that they were all to go together.

“Of course,” she wrote, “she and Car had numberless things which they ought to do,

and there was the Princess Branacia's breakfast, to which she had hoped to have taken him; but a little sight-seeing was such a pleasant variety amidst the frivolous social life of Rome, in which all its higher interests seemed lost and absorbed, that they could not resist the temptation, especially as Sir Frederick really seemed to wish it, and it was much better for him to go in the carriage than, as he was too fond of doing, in the tramway; which mode of conveyance he found a more novel and amusing one than any other. But she, for her part, thought it neither dignified nor safe; but that was *en passant*; the point of her note was to say that they would start about two o'clock, and would Adrian mind being there, to start with them from the Casa Pia, to save time, as Sir Frederick was dreadfully punctual, and the days were still short."

Adrian did not mind; he, too, was punctual, and at two o'clock they all started together, Car looking very bright and charming, as he took the place opposite to her in the

carriage, and showing no signs certainly, of being regretful of the Prince s Branacia's *fête*.

She seemed, as she would have herself expressed it, to have 'a great many things in her head' to-day ; and Adrian, with a renewed sense of that pleasure, fresh and healthful and eager, which took possession of his whole being again from the first instant that he contemplated her, smiled, as he met in her clear, bright gaze that same expression which he had noticed the afternoon before—of intelligence on the alert, and of mind eager for converse, and for the quick utterance and interchange, of the many girlish thoughts and fancies, with which her vivid young brain seemed full.

He had watched that expression gleam across her face and glisten in her eyes so many times, while he and her mother had talked or questioned each other during their first drive of yesterday. And now, as the carriage rolled on up the Corso, across the Forum of Trajan, along the Via Alessandrino, and past the basilica of Constantine, and as

Sir Frederick and Adrian and Lady Daring took up the thread of their talk of last night, and exchanged views and criticisms and speculations upon every object they passed, Car listened, with bright, sympathetic eagerness of glance turned from one to the other, not often contributing much in words, but, whenever Adrian spoke, answering his remark, if she approved it, with an emphatic assent from the full, clear gaze of her expressive eyes, or disagreeing as emphatically, with a turn of her small, graceful head to one side, and with that little, dubious smile, just as when he had said last night that he was "matter-of-fact."

"That is about the finest thing in Rome," Sir Frederick said, as they swept past the column of Trajan.

"I do not know, but what I agree with you," Adrian replied; "I think it is about as grand a trophy as I have seen. How, in heaven's name, did they get it up?—it is such a size and height! I find one can make nothing of the devices or caligraphy from the pillar

itself, but I got some fine photos of it this morning, and I have been examining them with a strong glass—they are beautiful.”

“What! you have been round here already this morning?” exclaimed Lady Daring.

“Oh, yes,” he said, “I came out very early, and had a great ‘turn around,’ as our *table d’hôte* Yankee puts it. I came all along here,” he continued, as they drove now behind the basilica, “and I paid my first visit to the Colosseum over there, too.”

“Ah, well,” sighed Lady Daring, “that is always something done! Much as I love it all, it is so large, so diffused—I mean the whole thing here—that it is fatiguing, if one allows one’s mind to dwell on what is to be seen, what must be seen, as Sir Frederick says.”

“Yes; but it is all a very fine enjoyment,” he answered, “of the rarest, of the most sublime sort,” and his gaze rested in the depth of Car’s as he went on, for those sweet, clear-speaking eyes were so directly opposite him, so bewitchingly near. “It was lovely here this morning,” he continued; “the atmo-

sphere was so transparent and clear; the whole thing looked grand."

"Stupendous, is it not?" added Sir Frederick, while they all gazed in silence for a moment, as they passed that huge, immortal thing—the ruin of ruins—the Colosseum, rearing its great, broken summit in desolation vast and unbeauteous, against the sweet, blue, lustrous sky.

The sky of Rome, clear and transparent, unclouded as the eyes of childhood in innocent unconscious bliss, and yet, still, the sky of Rome, which might well, from its limpid depths of radiance, have shed tears of anguish, tears of bitterness, and tears of blood over that ruin of colossal horror, where the gladiators and the martyrs died.

"Wherever one drives at Rome," said Lady Daring presently, with some impatience, "it always seems to me one has to pass the Colosseum. I am really tired of its great, jagged walls, and its empty eye-holes, and I never will quote, 'butchered to make a Roman holiday' again. Do *not* do it, please

Frederick; I see you are just going to begin."

"It is a glorious passage," he answered, laughing brightly at her. That way of hers, of dashing a cascade of the ridiculous over his tendencies to the sublime, was always a special delight to him, because he knew she felt it all as much as he did, only, as she expressed it, she 'hated the thing to become dull.'

"Do *not* do it, dear," she begged; "I could not stand the Dacian babes, nor their mother either, just at present. There now, you will forget it; the carriage has turned, and you cannot see the Colosseum any longer."

"You need not have come this way unless you liked it," said her husband; "indeed, I doubt if it is at all the most direct road to Baron Hoffmann's."

"Oh, the coachmen will always do it; it is no use remonstrating," she replied. "I suppose their sensibilities with regard to the Dacian babes and their parent are not so

acute, Frederick, as mine. But here we are, at the Porta Capena."

There was not much to draw at the Egerian Fount, but still Sir Frederick decided to reject his wife's suggestion of making simply a light water-colour sketch of the view over the Alban Hills, and chose to carry out his usual process of careful outline-drawing ('just as a memento of the scene and day,' he said) of the prosaic enough mediæval bath-house, which is built over the sacred water, as it springs from the well under the Cœlian Hill, at the corner of the grounds of the villa.

And he invited Car to companionate him, as she had done often before—sitting on the grass, or on a piece of rock, beside him, mending his pencils, or arranging his sepia ready on successions of fresh palettes, and talking to him the while, much lightening the solitude of his sketching-days, and forming many pleasant memories for them both.

To-day she consented at once, as usual, and took her place by his sketching-stool,

but her attention seemed to wander, as he spoke to her at first, and her gaze travelled away from the scene of the fount, and from the delicate outline of the study on his paper, from which on other days she had hardly ever lifted her eyes.

Both attention and eyes wandered now, up across the alleys of the garden, towards the slope of the Coelian Hill, where Lady Daring was slowly conducting Adrian, with the simply beneficent purpose, as she said, of showing him everything, and of beguiling as pleasantly as possible for him, the bright afternoon.

That, there was any other object more attractive to his mind at that moment in the grounds of the villa now called 'Hoffmann,' than that view towards Caracalla's huge ruined baths, or of those aqueducts of the Campagna, clearly visible from here, or even than the pedestals of the statues of Marcus Aurelius, dedicated to the soldiers of the fifth cohort of the Vigili, and bearing their names; that there was an object, restrained

down there in the corner by the Egerian Well, infinitely more interesting, to his thinking, than all or any of these things—she had not an idea ! not the remotest suspicion had reached her of the thought of such a thing—nor did it for several days !

And quite unconscious, not dreaming of his real thought, she slowly drew him on through the villa grounds from the far corner by the fountain, up by the site of the wall of Servius Tullius, to the alley of ilex, where the antique pedestals of the statues stood.

And there they paced together through the sunny hours ; she, pleased at the opportunity, given so easily by force of circumstances, for this converse with her friend of olden days, always to herself, *bon camarade* and cousin—and, for her sister's sake much more.

And he, pleased also, because he had always thoroughly liked her, and it was very delightful to renew this footing of friendly ease ; and pleased too, because of the turn their conversation took gradually towards

the only topic that for the moment he really loved. In the course of their talk he heard many things he wished to hear, and was told much that he desired to know.

At the beginning of their *tête-à-tête*, as the afternoon light glowed softly round them, and the ilex cast their dark, deep shade, as all was quiet and suggestive of softening themes, their words took form from their surroundings; and because, so vivid a spot lived in the past for both of them, memory soon began to murmur its sweet, old tale; and youth came back for them with all its intensity of association, and their hearts stirred with gentle feeling for the loved and gone.

And Lady Daring pursued the theme, as perhaps she would not have done just then, had she known, that that Star, which she thought shone afar for him, in unchanging though remote effulgence above his past, had come down, come quite close to him all suddenly into the living present, and that, with the joy and the glory of a living lustre,

it was shining, full of hope and brightness, along the future of his life.

She did not know, and he almost felt as if he must tell her ; but no, his heart said emphatically, not yet, not now.

So the past was revived once more between them in the ilex alley there, and Lady Daring at length said, what she had often longed to say to him, something of her own view of all that had been in that long ago ; and after many softly murmured remarks in reminiscence, she concluded, with a sudden brightening of voice and smile, with her own summing up of such a case.

“ It was entirely your own fault, you know, Adrian. It is the way you men make a mess of things just nine times out of ten. If we women could only have some apprenticeship, to learn the possibilities of procedure in you, before we meet the *one* among you who is our destiny, and who, if we allow to you *ce grand honneur*, my cousin, makes coolly a ruin of our lives.”

“ Surely,” he said, with sudden pathos in

his tone, for he did not like that particular view of it, by any means, after all his own personal sufferings, “surely, Vere, I was not to blame?”

“Of course you were,” she answered. “Why did you draw me on to say all I did that night in the rose-garden? You did it; I scarcely knew what I said, and you, you said it all, Adrian, not I; and it was nothing but your masculine vanity and pride.”

“I dare say it was,” he replied, in a meditative manner this time, for it struck him forcibly, as she recalled that talk, that he would not do the same thing now.

“Of course it was. Why did you give way to such ideas? why did you express them to me? A man loved a woman, and she loved him, and behold! they agreed, with all courtesy and deliberation, to abandon one another, because—I am sure I do not know the ‘because’! Nor, for the life of me, did I ever understand why you did not come back again! If you cared, Adrian, why did you so easily let it go?”

"I supposed she did not care," he answered; "you know I thought so for long."

"Until I assured you otherwise, too late," was her answer now, in a softened tone again.

"Yes, till you sent me those letters and little writings of hers from India afterwards; those revelations of her hidden self which seem to have bound me in strong fidelity to her name till now; I had no idea, I never thought, I fancied all the pain was mine."

"Dear me!" sighed Lady Daring, "when I remember everything! What! the pain all yours, you thought! the loss, the ruin, all, only yours! How like that is, to all you men, again; 'you never thought,' you 'had no idea,' you 'never knew'! Why does it never cross a man's mind, I so often ask myself, why does it never come to him to wonder, if a woman, who at least once *seemed* to love him—may not be suffering, too?"

"Ah," he answered quickly, "that does not occur to us. I suppose we should imagine that *that*, if you please, would be vanity,

more than the other vanity which you described."

"No, not vanity ; only a feeling that ought much oftener, in my opinion, to exist. You win a heart—you love to win it—and then because something in the wearing of what you win, threatens to sting and annoy perhaps, you put it aside ; you lack courage often on your side, Adrian—courage to take possession of what you desire and win. Why do not men understand better all the reserve and doubt and difficulty which so many young things like Cecilia, feel always, before the complete resignation of their lives. Oh, Adrian ! why did you not give her one other chance, after she came to realize herself—her heart's true history—and you ? "

"I threw myself into other things," he answered. "I thought it was over, all done for, as regarded happiness for me, and I did not want it to destroy my force of interest. I took up a line, and have gone on."

"Just the old tale after all," she added, smiling at him, and slowly shaking her head.

"Donna Julia was right, when all is said; you could make it a 'thing apart;' it was her 'whole existence.'"

"It was my whole heart's existence," he answered. "After all, Vere, it was she who married, not I."

"Ah! now there is just another point where you have so much the advantage of us," Lady Daring replied, with conclusive emphasis. "Women often must marry; a man never need. But after all, Adrian," she added, in an altered tone, "was that really the reason why you have not married in all these years? Really the reason? No?"

"The only one," he said. "I had my view of it, you see. There were only two things left for me to do after I got your Indian letters, and knew that all was over. I might have married—formed an eligible alliance such as my dear old aunt, Lady Dillon, used to recommend to me continually; a marriage with nothing in it of all I had hoped to find; or I might wait, if it was my whole life-time, wait—until I found my old ideal again once

more, or until, at least, its likeness came back to me again."

"And you waited."

"I waited and I worked; that was all that was left for me to do."

"You have worked, indeed; and, in your chosen way, worked well. But now, Adrian," she continued, with that soft intonation of sympathy, which will steal at such moments, into every charming woman's voice, "now, must it be always so? It pains me to think of all that the past has cost you; all, of which it has robbed your life."

"The future may compensate—far more than compensate," he murmured, with a sudden ring of intense sensibility and passionate tenderness, echoing in his low, eager tones.

Lady Daring looked quickly at him, for the sudden change of voice took her by surprise—she had not expected it—he had been so cool through all their retrospect, so calm under even her personal aggressions upon his past, so decorously composed and ab-

solutely controlled, that this exclamation startled her now with its weight of passionate feeling, and it touched her also with a curious agitation, with an intensity of sudden sympathy for him, which was quite real, not the mere outcome of softened sentiment, as before.

“I am sure I hope it may, dear old friend,” she answered. “God grant it may.”

And there was a moment’s silence between them.

He was gathering himself back again ; she was dreaming over the significance of his last words—and, more than the words, over the tone of his voice and his manner ; and she was wondering—suddenly wondering—what there was, after all, that perhaps she did not know—evidently something. And then she suddenly realized, that she had not seen him for years.

She, too, gathered herself together again after a moment, and said with energy, and in her usual bright, sweet tone,—

“After all, we are all apt to go on, for years sometimes, living calmly and almost

(I say it of myself, not you) stupidly, below, far below the level of life possible to us, if we only knew—living long, without the enjoyment of the finest feelings of which our nature is capable; because we do not realize what they may be to us, and we let them alone. The water flows close by our very feet, and we know it not, and though often enough athirst perhaps, we do not stoop to drink. It was so with me and that sweet child of mine—can you believe it, I never realized, what she would be to me, till I met her at Venice?”

“No?” He said it in a tone of surprise—of inquiry—of presumed interest, which suddenly became strangely cold and stern.

She misunderstood his tone, as was now perhaps natural. She glanced round at him again; his eyelids drooped, a flush of deep colour swept over his face for a moment, and left him pale; he compressed his lips beneath his long moustache with that effort at composure which made him always stern; and only that monosyllable came in answer to her

sudden confidence of feelings, so very personal to herself.

“Do not misjudge me,” she said presently, in a deprecating tone, so utterly had she read his countenance wrong. “I do not mean, that I did not care for Car—that I was a heartless mother, Adrian, deserving of your reproof, but I was never a child-lover, as her father was; and so occupied was I always in India, with so many large social concerns that were so important to Frederick, and always wishing to be with him, that I never acquired the habit of those maternal dreams and longings which, I fear, form so great a part of the exiled life of so many Indian mothers, weaker, or perhaps softer women than I. So she came like a surprise upon me, Adrian, in her beauty, her *naïveté*, her charm. And now you cannot imagine what it is. The wonder she is to me always, and continuously still. We can hardly conceive to ourselves, Adrian, you and I, in our middle age, what that bright young mind is in reality, in her world

within herself, almost the only world she knows."

"To whom did you send her?" said Adrian suddenly, as she paused, "when you parted with her ten years ago?"

"Oh, to Frederick's sister, Helen Daring, at Hampton Place, near his old home, you know, near his elder brother. Helen is the unmarried aunt of the family, and we sent Car to her care: she has had the sweet old-fashioned bringing-up of an old-day country home—it was what Frederick wished for her, and I think he was right. Only she came to London and Paris because of her music. We wrote and begged this, when Helen wrote and said, she had such promise of a gift in this line. Frederick is so fond of it, and he always says he likes a woman to have, what he calls a 'grace.'"

"I think Sir Frederick is right," said Adrian, and his eyes were raised to her face now, and fixed there with a grave, eager expression of interest, that said much more than his words, and she went on again,—

"Helen Daring is a good woman, and from her, no doubt, Car has imbibed many of her ethereal ideas; she is a little *exaltée*, you know, on most of the more serious questions of life; but it is pretty to hear her, it is touching and pretty in a bright young thing like she is, with all her life and pleasure to come. And, dear me, it is enviable sometimes, to our fatigued and clouded vision, that wonderful clear, bright gaze. That child, Adrian, believes everything—all that we feel to be so doubtful and so dim."

"Enviably indeed!" he said in a low, grave tone. "What is hid from the wise and prudent," he added, with a soft cynical smile.

"Yes, just so, exactly; and she has a way of her own, do you know, of talking to herself about it all, explaining to her own mind in allegory, 'thinking pictures,' as I call it, when she tells me sometimes her little thoughts. It is very wonderful to me. Life had long ago grown so day-light to my vision, so unmystical, so exact, and here

is this young thing with me continually now, contesting again and again with most foolish, most unpractical, but most unanswerable arguments, many of my most cherished views; and the strange part of it is, Adrian, what you, who have long known me, will scarcely believe, that I, who have been all my life most persistent in my own views and theories, I *love* to have them ‘bouleversé’ by her.”

He smiled—such a sweet winning smile upon her now at this point, and with such a tender eager sympathy in his grave eyes, that she felt he quite understood her, and once more she spoke again.

“But the worst of it all is, Adrian, when I think about her life. What am I to do with her, that will come up to her ideal? How can I find for her what will make her happy, and yet be all that I should like her destiny to be?”

“Ah!” he began in a deep tone, and then caught himself up again, and said no more.

“Yes, that is it. When I think of what

all, all of *us* managed to suffer, and to inflict upon one another in the days of our young life—I fear. And when I think what the world is for women, if they do not succeed according to the standards it has set up for them, and how much they must often sacrifice for that success before it is theirs, then I fear again and again, Adrian, and I realize what it is, when some one lives for you, whose happiness is dearer than your own. I so fear that she will sacrifice so much, *all*, according to my views, to those ideals of her own, and then that they may prove illusions for her in the end; and yet, I could not see her suffer, even as I suffered, far less as others did, at that forced abandonment of what, I do believe, if it came to it, would be all her life to her. But dear me, Adrian,” she exclaimed in a quickly changed tone, but with a ripple of laughter that had a softened echo in it still, “could you have believed it of me? Fancy my beguiling you under the ilex shades, to bore you with a maternal rhapsody all this bright afternoon!”

His heart was so stirred within him, that as he paused and turned round in the avenue before her, he could not for a moment speak.

She looked up, and met gratefully the expression of silent sympathy in his kind grave eyes, and she answered with a gleam of friendly affection from hers, and she would again have spoken, but the impulse of conscience was strong upon him just then, and he felt he must, he ought to tell her all.

"Vere," he began, and he pulled his long bronze moustaches. His eyes burnt strangely as they rested on hers, and she thought again, as she had done the night before, "*how sensible* he was!" He paused, and then in another moment he would have answered all her confidences, as his high-strung conscientiousness impelled him to do—but that one moment was lost to them, and for days it did not return again!

Sir Frederick's cheerful tones were heard just then, echoing across the grounds, and calling them both aloud by name, and then

with a ringing "Hurrah! here they are at last, Car!" he appeared at the further end of the ilex alley, and they realized, that, as they had slowly paced and earnestly talked together, with interest so concentrated, so absorbed, the sun had gone low down towards the western horizon, and that the crimson glow of the Roman winter evening was deepening quickly on the Albano Hills.

It was long since time to be driving homewards, and the carriage was ready, waiting at the lower gate.

The city seemed on fire as they drove along the Via Paolo, and round by the great old ruins once more. That wondrous crimson and orange light shed forth from the gorgeous golden throne of the setting Italian sun was glowing deep, warm, and intense, with lustrous ruby hue, upon every ruin and building of the great city, on everything, old and new. The carriage bowled rapidly on, as through a fire-mist. The Sun-king was dying gloriously to-day.

“I like this,” murmured Car suddenly, after a moment of silence in which they had all looked round upon the splendour of the scene. “I like the day to end in light, like this.”

“You mean you like a good sunset,” said her mother, with her little bright laugh.

“Oh, but I mean in everything; I like it to glow brighter and stronger and more beautiful to the end. I hate the day to die in gloom, and I dislike to read the last chapter of so many books, because in such gray and desolate sadness they droop away and fade. To die gloriously, whatever happened, would be my idea always,” she continued; “die in light, in the lustre of achievement, like this day—light, life, colour to the very end!”

“You have been ‘picture thinking,’ I see, you little dreaming thing,” said her mother tenderly, putting up a finger to touch softly the girl’s warm, flushed cheek. “While your father has been doing his outline of the Egerian Fount, you have been sitting there

dreaming away the time by his side, and he has no doubt been talking on to you, without ever realizing that you were wandering away, and that you had conjured up Numa's mystic nymph from the depth of the water-spring to converse with you the while. I see it in your eyes, Car; you have been 'picture dreaming.' I wish I had been there to wake you up. I told you, Adrian, and just look at her now; does she not look as if we had just startled her from her dreams? I told you of her 'picture thinking,' did I not?"

The girl blushed crimson for an instant, and she glanced reproachfully at her mother's laughing face. The rallying tone in the bright voice would have dissipated, pleasantly perhaps, but quite effectually, most day-dreams; and then Car looked round upon Adrian sitting opposite to her, and in the ruby glow of the sunset she met his deep grave eyes, and she felt, with a thrill of strange and intense sweetness in her young heart, the strongly magnetic sympathy of his steady gaze.

He understood, he was quite grave.

She answered his gaze full and steadily, a light quivering in her eyes, as they searched and questioned and drew out the expression of that subtle deep current of understanding in his.

"Picture thinking?" he said softly, in a hesitating and meditative tone, as if making quite clear to his own mind the idea in hers.

"Yes, yes," she said, "you understand. It is finding meanings in things, like your hieroglyphics, like you told me yesterday, about your vulture and your bee and your king."

"I see, yes," he answered brightly, with a sudden, eager light and a smile breaking over his strong face, "I see."

"Yes, I know you do. He does it, mother, too!"

Lady Daring laughed tenderly again, and patted the girl's hand with a quick, light touch, and then glanced across at her husband, who was conning Car's vivid countenance with a quizzical and amused gaze.

"Well, well," she said, "if you read the hieroglyphics of life aright, my darling, with your 'picture thinking,' and interpret them as well as Adrian interprets his hieroglyphics of the antique, then I am sure I shall be satisfied, even if I may not always follow your flights. But how does your practical picture progress, Frederick? Did you do good work?"

"Oh, there was not much," he said, "that was very interesting to draw. This one afternoon did it; I will not give it another day. To-morrow I shall go to the baker's tomb."

"Dear me," said Lady Daring, with a little quick sigh, for which Sir Frederick laughed at her, and shook his head.

"Oh, you need not come," he said, "none of you. Though, of course, Dillon must see it while he is here. But I shall be quite satisfied to do a day's good drawing by myself to-morrow."

"Satisfied without our pleasant company even?" said his wife, shaking her head, with a bright glance at him in her turn.

"Well, it takes up time when there are numbers," he replied; "that is certain. But what do you think you will all do?"

"Oh, there are quantities of things we ought to do," began Lady Daring; but Car interrupted her reply.

"Oh, mother, do let us make the pilgrimage to-morrow."

"You mean, take Adrian for a day's sight-seeing. Well—"

"You did promise to do it, you know," said her cousin.

"Did I? Well, why should we not? It shall be Car's pilgrimage—to everything she likes."

"Not everything," the girl murmured, as her mind wandered over vistas and arrays of her favourite corners of Rome; "but just a few. Then on other days we can do the rest. I did not say nearly all when we talked of them, you know. I have been thinking of so many since. There is Raphael's house, and—"

"Oh, we enumerated quite enough for our

start, my love; and more than enough for to-morrow."

"Where shall we begin?" continued Car, colouring up now, and her eyes dancing with enthusiasm as she gave the enterprise her best and most eager thought.

"The Cenci—?" Lady Daring suggested.

"Oh, yes," Sir Frederick said, "take Dillon there. Go and look at those eyes," he continued, turning to Adrian, "for you will never see them in any copy. Nothing approaches the reality of that picture in the old Barbarini Salle; nowhere in the wide world can we see the gaze of Beatrice Cenci without coming to Rome; save," he added, with a tender emphasis in his tone, "in a case just now and then, when you meet them gazing at you—from a woman's face. Only Guido has painted them; but you meet them just once in a lifetime, and when you do—then know, Dillon, that you are a gone man."

"My dear Frederick, how affecting," said his wife, "and from you, too, when I fear no

one can credit *me* with having the Cenci eyes ! ”

“ No, indeed,” he answered pleasantly, “ yours have their own special qualities, my dear—but the Cenci ! Her eyes have that pathos which is irresistible, if not always deserving. It is a something that affects us, Dillon, in the gaze of a saint or a martyr truly, if you will, but also affects us equally sometimes in the eyes of a woman—who has been, neither a martyr nor a saint.”

“ My dear Frederick ! ”

“ You take him to see it,” Sir Frederick concluded, “ and we shall hear what is his view. By the way, I hope you two were not impatient,” he added presently. “ Car said I kept you waiting such a long time to-day. But the place was pretty ; you did not mind, did you, Vere ? ”

“ Not in the least, for my part,” she answered, “ and I hope Adrian was not too much bored.”

“ I—impossible ! ” he answered.

“ We had a pleasant, old-day gossip,”

Lady Daring went on, "and told each other all kinds of things."

"That is just my idea of what I really like," said Car, in a quiet tone of decision.

"What—a gossip about old, long-ago days?"

"Not always that," she answered, looking across once more at Adrian, and speaking gravely and emphatically now, as if straight to him. "But what I think is the beginning of *liking* people, and the niceness of it all through, is when you feel you want to tell them things, and when you feel there is so much you want them—to tell to you. 'Telling each other things,' that is what I mean by friendship," she said.

Her mother laughed her bright, rallying laugh again, that was always provoked, half-tenderly, half-derisively, by the demure utterance of one of Car's small private meditations for the benefit of the general talk.

And just then, before any one could answer, the carriage swept up to the door of the Casa Pia, through the old Spanish Place again, and the drive was at an end.

CHAPTER VII.

THE CALTHORPES.

WHEN the '*psyche*' dwelling in the solitude of two beings, looks out in each from its hiding-place within human nature's depths, and there is a mutual recognition, and the genius and essence of the soul goes forth in one to meet the other, along the mystic courses of the heart's election and affinity—imponderable and occult forces, for which we have no very definite names—then a time comes when there is an eager and impetuous longing for the interchange of speech. And this, is occasionally obstructed by battlements of opposing circumstances, which are difficult to overcome.

This Adrian felt to be his position as he

went up the stone stairs again of his hotel at the Piazza corner, and looked dreamily into the burning crimson depths of the hot charcoal of the scaldino, as he paused on the upper landing to think.

What, was to be done?

Vere Daring, his pleasant, brilliant cousin, what should he do—with her, and with all that he instinctively knew to be her social theories and views? If he had been a *parti* of the quality most desirable, and she a mother of the great world, most desirous of binding him and all his mundane advantages at her daughter's feet, she could not more dexterously have pursued her course than she had done that afternoon.

Every word she had said had deepened his love for Car, every little attribute and peculiarity of the nature she had described to him, had made his thought of the girl more delicately tender and sweet.

The whole soft picture of her own mother-love, and of all that her young daughter had brought of heart's depth and beauty into her

life, had touched him ineffably, and he knew the very fact of all she had said to him showed how unconscious of the truth she was.

For Adrian was no *parti*—a poor man always—son of a second son, a man who could never have *made* a fortune, and who had been careless of the world's favour and of all its lower good.

Such distinction as he had won for himself, very real as it might be, was yet of that special kind for which a special culture is required even to appreciate it.

Like the taste for olives, or for fine, old wine, those who could recognize its real merit were few. No girl could be said to make a brilliant alliance because her husband could interpret the Rosetta Stone. And to Vere Daring he well knew it would be a bitterness if her daughter made any alliance that was not brilliant. So, with the imprisoned '*psychai*,' who pined for intercourse, how must it fare? Ill, he feared badly. Ought he to go off on the very morrow?

As he so reflected, a door opened on the landing by his side. The great dinner-bell was clanging through the tall house at the moment, till now quite unheeded by him, and doors were opening simultaneously everywhere, and people were going down to dinner ; and just then this particular door was thrown suddenly open, along with the rest, and after an instant's pause and hesitation some one exclaimed his name,—

“ Mr. Dillon, how do you do ? ”

He looked round, as a lady came out on the landing and extended her hand. At the same time she called back into the room,—

“ Philip, here is actually Mr. Dillon ! How round the world is ! Whom may one not meet ? ”

“ How do you do ? ” Adrian said ; “ I am very glad to see you. I was not aware that there was any one I knew in the hotel.”

“ We have only just come to-day,” she answered. “ We have come from Naples on our way home from Greece.”

"From Greece?" said Adrian absently.

"Yes," she continued, "actually from Greece; and you must come in after dinner and see some nice old pottery we found in these last travels of ours; we have just been unpacking it. I am sure it will interest you very much."

"I know it will," he said; and he turned again to shake hands with the small, intellectual-looking man who had emerged also from the sitting-room as they talked, and who was her husband.

They were the Honourable Philip Calthorpes—pleasant, well-bred, and well-to-do people, whom he knew in London, and one of the small and highly cultured circle who knew much of him.

They were people who had strongly developed that 'olives and old wine' taste, and, having wealth and no children, they could travel all over the world to indulge it.

"Let us dine together," said Mrs. Calthorpe, when the exchange of greetings had been accomplished; "we have a little table

for ourselves apart. Philip shall have a third place put ready for you while you dress, for I see you have only just come it. We shall be only too delighted to wait."

"Thanks, very much; that will be charming. I shall not be more than ten minutes," he said.

And accordingly, in little more than that time, he joined them, attired with haste, but with care also, for he appeared in full evening dress.

The *table-d'hôte* did not require this; but the fact of the matter was, that, before leaving the Darings, he had promised to join them in the Teatro di Apollo at nine o'clock.

He had a pleasant dinner with the Calthorpes; and so attractive was their talk and all their graphic reminiscences of Athens and many other cities and corners of Greece, that, absent and dreamy as he was just then, he became gradually interested; and he certainly, at least, had no available ears to-night for the *table-d'hôte* controversies which waxed as warm and raged gradually as furiously as

ever, over every kind of curious subject open to dispute in the Rome of the classics or the Popes.

It was all lost upon Adrian, and only Mrs. Calthorpe now and then listened, and was amused.

But even her attention seldom wandered from their pleasant little triangle of interesting converse at their own small table behind Mr. Swinford's back; and if her listening powers did wander, they were speedily recalled again by her husband, because of some question of memory at fault on his part, or on Adrian's, on some point of the ruins so unspeakably interesting of that still more classic land than Italy, from which they had just come.

They had an agreeable dinner; and afterwards they begged him to pass the evening with them in their *salon*, and to tell them of his Roman explorations among the trophies of Egypt to be found in Rome; and to examine their fine specimens of pottery brought by them from the south.

They pressed the invitation cordially, as they walked together up the staircase after dinner ; and when, after many turnings, and passing many glowing scaldini, they once more reached their door.

“ Oh, thanks, very much,” Adrian said, hesitating a moment, and glancing doubtfully into the warmly-lit *salon*, “ I should like immensely to come in just for a little while ; and I am so very glad I have met you, Mrs. Calthorpe, but—the fact is, I am going to be rather frivolous this evening, and am not exactly in a frame of mind in which I might descant to you on the obelisks as worthily as I could wish. I am going to join my cousins, the Darings, at the opera at nine o’clock.”

“ The Darings ! ” exclaimed Mrs. Calthorpe, as she led the way into her *salon*. “ Not Sir Frederick and Lady Daring on their way back from India ? ”

“ Yes, just exactly them. She is a cousin of mine ; and, well—I think I must go for a while, as I promised. But otherwise, the

opera is not, generally speaking, much in my line."

"Why not?" said Mrs. Calthorpe cheerfully, for she was a very cheerful and enlivening lady, pleasant on many subjects besides pottery and Greece. "Why not? But the Darings! I am so pleased. Why, she is one of my oldest friends, and I have not seen her for years—not since Philip and I made that tremendous Indian tour of ours. We stayed with them then at their Government House, and they were so kind. We shall be so pleased to see them again, shall we not, Philip? My dear, you need not surely put more wood on that fire."

Mr. Calthorpe had come first into the *salon*, while she had paused a moment on the landing with Adrian, and had been occupying himself with the fire, which is more or less a source of constant occupation in those southern countries during the absence of the sun. He had piled on wood, and made a cheerful blaze; but now he assented to his wife's opinion that he had done enough towards warmth

and cheerfulness, and he turned and stood, like a true Englishman, on the rug, and enjoyed it, surveying Adrian the while.

"I am very glad, indeed," he said, "to hear that we shall meet the Darings—him especially. Sir Frederick is a first-rate man."

"I fancy he is," said Adrian. "Here, he is for the moment at play, amusing and enjoying himself like a boy. It is charming to see him."

"He well deserves it," said Mr. Calthorpe. "He has done good work."

"And she," continued Mrs. Calthorpe, "did you say she is a relation of yours, Mr. Dillon? I believe, in some way or other, she is also a cousin of mine. I am so bad at remembering how relationships stand, though I know it is the case. But, besides, Vere Daring is my very old friend. She is charming; but, do you know, she is the one woman in the world about whom I never in the least can make up my mind. Is she, can you tell me, the most worldly, cool, and ambitious, or

the most *sensible* and disinterested person of your acquaintance—which ?”

Adrian laughed a little, and lowered his eyes from her face to the level of the bright dancing flames of the log fire; and he smoothed his moustache, considering, before he replied. Then in a quiet tone he said,—

“I fancy she has, like many of your sex, Mrs. Calthorpe, a character which is a little complex.”

“Difficult to classify or describe,” retorted Mrs. Calthorpe, smiling at him, “or, at least, you will not do it. I dare say you are right. Well, at all events, I shall be delighted to see her again; and do tell her so, if you meet her to-night. Oh, you are going to join her, you said. Where? At the opera, the ‘Apollo’? And, by-the-bye, of course, yes, I hear she has had her pretty daughter out here to meet them, and that she is taking her about. Is she pretty?”

“She is like her mother in many points,” he answered, rather evasively again. ‘Pretty’

seemed such a slight, poor word to apply to Car, in all her young, stately grace.

“But you will see her,” he added.

He feared to give himself rein just then to say more.

“Ah, I hope so. I hear that young Lord Farnham lost his head and heart to her at Venice. He was down at Naples all last week.”

“Indeed !” And this was all that on this point Adrian seemed to wish to say ; so Mrs. Calthorpe continued,—

“Yes, he was there with his tutor. A nice young boy is Lord Farnham, too. It would be a charming thing for her : he his own father already. He has a fine position, and is just of age. What more could the heart of mother, or daughter either, require in this intelligent era, Mr. Dillon ?”

“What, indeed !” he replied ; but his gaze turned uneasily away from her quick eyes, and wandered to where Mr. Calthorpe had now betaken himself, to a *buffet* where the quaint old pieces of rare pottery were ar-

ranged. They were curious, rather ugly, but of infinite value, being excellent specimens of the four styles respectively of the ancient fictile art—of the Phœnician, early Greek, classical, and the ‘decorated.’ It was difficult to see such trophies of a collector’s ardour anywhere outside the walls of the Vatican or of the museum at Naples. But Mr. Calthorpe, as a collector, was indefatigable indeed.

“I really must be off,” said Adrian suddenly; “but I should just like to look at these. How fine they are!”

“Are they not? A satisfactory ‘find,’ indeed,” said Mr. Calthorpe. “Look, this is Phœnician, this pale red with horizontal bands filled in with animals and fruit and flowers; and this,” he added, touching a strange-looking but rather graceful jug, “is the early Greek, or Etruscan, as we call it—only it is really Greek. Look, this deep, red ground with black devices; and this,” he continued, taking up a huge and very ugly old vase affectionately, “is a piece of genuine ‘decorated,’ from a Grecian tomb.

Do look ! How the style of ornament has altered ! This is the latest date I have—all symbolic devices, all mythological.”

“Wonderful !” exclaimed Adrian. “What splendid things to have picked up ! How clever of you !”

“Oh, I got most of this at Athens, and the rest at Naples. That tutor of Lord Farnham—‘Jorraz,’ the fellow’s name is—he was capital. He knew every hole and corner of Naples, and told me of numbers of things,” said Mr. Calthorpe. “He is coming on here, I hope, immediately.”

“Oh, yes,” said his wife, coming slowly up to his side, before the great *buffet* laden with pottery, “they will be here to-morrow or next day. And do not the Darings expect Lord Farnham ?” she continued. “You have heard them speak of him, I suppose ?”

“I have heard them mention him, I think,” said Adrian, with a certain touch of coldness in his tone, for at that moment he decidedly did not like her—and felt disposed to show it ! She irritated him extremely for the time

being, did pleasant little Mrs. Calthorpe, with her pottery, and her cheery smile, and her emphatic statements, and her lively, friendly ways; and yet, he did not feel inclined to say anything in answer to those statements; nor, indeed, did anything occur to him on the subject which he felt it would be desirable to say. Only he was deeply and uncontrollably irritated; and as for the Grecian pottery, in the present sadly deteriorated condition of his appreciative mind—the Grecian pottery bored him to the last possible degree!

So he took his leave a few minutes after this, and went off to the Teatro di Apollo.

Lady Daring had announced casually during the afternoon, that, because they had an agreeable, clever cousin, who had made his appearance and requested to be lionized about Rome, this was no reason why they should turn their backs entirely upon society, or abjure the world; and as the Duchessa di Pantuoli had been so amiable as to send

them her large box on the second and therefore "grand tier" of the Apollo for that evening, they might as well go—also invite some people to meet them there, and Adrian amongst the number, if he so pleased.

And accordingly he arrived—a little late, because the Calthorpes had detained him much longer than he had known—arrived, to find their large palco the brilliant centre of a very brilliant scene.

The carnival was approaching its height. In the next week would be the gay days of the confetti, of dominoes, and veglione and tempesta dei fiori, and all the other joys and riots of the carnival's close; and now, this week, were the great operatic nights, when the Teatro di Apollo afforded beautiful performances of the most lovely music for the most select *élite* of the Italian social world. And when even the spectacle of the house was brilliant, filled throughout in every palco and seat, from the smallest and most obscure corner to the great royal box, where sat the

King and the lovely and much-loved Queen Marghuerita, the "Perla d'Italia," surrounded by all the grace and bravery of their bright young court. Several of the embassies and their *entourage* were present, resplendent in every national variety of diplomatic dress. And beauty and youth and fashion were all there as well, ranged in glowing circles of colour and of glittering light. It was a very brilliant scene; and, above all, floated continually lovely strains of orchestral music, and more lovely echoes of song.

In Lady Daring's box there was assembled, when Adrian arrived, a gay and lively party. An Italian Principessa, whom Vere for the moment loved, sat in the front seats, with Car by her side. And by the Principessa's chair was Sir Frederick, while a trio of young persons were grouped behind and beside Car—an Italian, an Englishman, and a Russian, choice flowers plucked by Lady Daring, with forethought and care, for appearance in so conspicuous a place, from the

highest social grades of multifarious nationalities to be found at Rome. They were all being evidently very pleasant to each other, and to the Principessa ; and at intervals, when she gave them in turn an opportunity, being most charming also, according to their divers lights, to Car. But she was, or pretended to be, absorbed in the music, and gave them little chance.

As Adrian entered the box she glanced round, and for one second a beautiful radiance lit up her whole face, dancing exquisitely in a passing gleam both on lips and eyes, and enchanting him in his first glance her way. How lovely she looked !

They were going on to a great assembly at the Colonna Palace after the opera, as he knew, and therefore the full radiance of her attire. It was simple enough—as became her age and her mother's perfect judgment in such things ; but to his mind it was lovely in its delicacy, lightness and charm—lovely, though only another variety of her favourite cream gauze and pearls.

The pearls were twisted through her brown, bright hair to-night, and curled round her throat and arms.

He could not reach her, to talk to her—he had come so late ; so he could only, all the evening through, admire, and delight his never-wearied gaze in admiring, the beautiful *pose* of her head, as she sat there, and as she turned occasionally in that pretty, stately, deliberate way of hers, towards one of the three young men around her chair.

He had to be content with this still, this distant and speechless gaze, and he had to sit down, in the back part of the palco, by Lady Daring, who hated the glare of the light there in front, but who carried on her own charming person, in prospect of the Colonna ball, enough splendour in diamonds to illuminate the shady curtained corner, where she had chosen to sit.

A handsome Italian, elderly and covered with orders and decorations, sat on one side of her, and the other seat near the door had been kept for Adrian.

"Why are you so late?" she said to him in a low tone, as he entered. "See, the only place remaining is this very bad one, this last by me."

"I can never count my fortune bad, that brings me by you," he said courteously, as he took his place.

"Oh, that is all very well," she answered, "and it is very prettily said, but you need not have been so far back. I always like best to sit here myself, it is true; because, when I am going on afterwards, the heat and glare of the front places make me tired. Besides, one can talk a little in lowered voice back here; why did you not come?—I said eight o'clock."

"Yes, I know it is very stupid; but the fact is, I met some people, and we got talking about Greece, and about pottery and things. They have brought up some very good old ware from the south. And, by the way, they know you, and send you all kinds of sayings, *bien de bonnes choses de leur part*."

"But who?" she said.

"Oh, I forgot, yes," he was gazing down the box (at the stage, as she thought) really at the pearl-wreathed coils at the back of Car's head; "I forgot, it is the Calthorpes."

"What! the Philip Calthorpes, Lord Caringford's son?"

"Yes, it is them," he went on, a little absently still. "Very nice people, I *used* to like them very much," he added, suddenly demanding of himself what they had said or done that evening that had made him like them less than before. Why had he hated them emphatically during that last ten minutes, he wondered—because they had spoken of Lord Farnham, whose name they had linked with Car's?—only empty and groundless rumour perhaps, for Lord Farnham had been mentioned several times at the Casa Pia, without significance of any kind. But still it startled him, to realize how annoyed he had been!—and he had always so very much liked the Calthorpes.

He was annoyed still, but he roused himself. He would think no more of the

Calthorpes—nor of Lord Farnham either! The present was his own, and there was at least to-morrow. He would banish this sense of irritation entirely for the time being, he would listen and dream and enjoy, and gaze also—as Car’s lovely profile was at that moment turned a little towards him, while she bent her head ever so slightly to listen to a low murmur from the young Conte Salini, whose seat was next to hers.

So Adrian’s restless thoughts ran on, as the flood of beautiful sound filled the house, and the lights danced brilliantly on lovely women and on many jewels and on the bright stars and decorations of brave men, and as his cousin Vere Daring said again suddenly, while his thoughts went wandering down still to the front of the box,—

“But the Philip Calthorpes are very charming people. I am so glad that they have come. I shall be delighted to see them, and I will write and ask them to come and lunch with us to-morrow, I will; I will send first thing in the morning, and perhaps, if

she has not arranged for her carriage yet, she might like to drive with us in the afternoon, for Car's pilgrimage, you know, Adrian, is to come off to-morrow."

This last brought his attention back, and he listened, as his cousin went on,—

"She is a dear little woman; only, you know, I never feel quite certain about her; she puzzles me more than any one I know; she did out in India. What do you think, is she quite genuine? That love of those hideous old potteries, you know, and that kind of thing, the character is so contradictory, eh? What do you think?"

"A little complex, I should imagine," he murmured, still in a low undertone, and with a curious little smile curling the corners of his mouth.

"Complex," repeated Lady Daring, "yes, just so, complex, yes, very; but, at all events, I like her extremely, and she is a relation of mine."

"So she says," said Adrian; "only she does not know how."

“Oh, I know; she was a Fitz-Edward, and her mother a Denleigh, and my grandmother was one, too—that is it; she is no relation of yours, Adrian; you and I are cousins on my father’s side, and through your old aunt, Lady Dillon, whom you mentioned to-day. And that reminds me, how is your dear old uncle? How kind they used both to be to me when I was a girl, and how I loved to go to the Court! How is he? And his son, Henry, he never married, did he? Where is he?”

“Tiger-potting in Mysore at this precise moment, I believe. Yes, the dear old uncle is alone at the Court; he is getting on in years. You will find him altered; I often go to see him, and I shall run down when I get back to England.”

“Oh, then, do give him my love,” she responded lightly; “and now we must listen to this lovely song.”

As they all came out an hour afterwards, Adrian was clever, in that quiet way of his of arriving at his own goal, and perhaps Car

helped him a little on this occasion; but so it was, as they all trooped down the crowded corridor to the exit, her gloved hand was nestling softly within his arm, her blue, bright eyes were looking for that fleeting, but perfect moment deep into his, and her voice was saying in low tones of reproach,—

“Why did you come so late?”

And he was answering, he never knew *what*, in words! But for that little time they were alone, in the solitude, so complete, of a busy crowd. For the Principessa absorbed Sir Frederick and all the three young men in finding her gorgeous carriage, and Lady Daring was well cared for by the handsome old Italian with the great star.

It was a blissful, intoxicating, fleeting moment—but the *psychai* travelled far towards the meeting-point, far and swiftly in that little time!

CHAPTER VIII.

“LOVE THE PILGRIM.”

CAR's ‘pilgrimage’ came off next day ; on the Wednesday of that significant week,—according to promise.

Very early in the day, considering how late the Colonna ball was kept up, Lady Daring sent two notes to the Albergo Parigi beneath the Pincian Hill. One to Adrian, saying, that in the hurry and confusion of their separation at the Teatro di Apollo she had never wished him *la buona notte*, neither had she given the invitation, which accordingly she sent him now :—‘ Would he lunch with them that day, to meet the Philip Calthorpes and drive with them afterwards to wherever

Car chose, as this was to be her special afternoon ?'

He sent his servant with an appropriate reply, expressing as composedly as possible the intense ecstasy of gladness in anticipation, which glowed deep and glorious within his heart.

For indeed, odd to say, considering his annoyance of that night, the thought of the Honourable Mrs. Philip Calthorpe was a great accession of happiness to him this morning. A feeling which she herself, pleasant little lady as she was, would have found it difficult to explain in all its intensity.

Mrs. Philip Calthorpe knew that Mr. Adrian Dillon liked her very well, and that her pretty little house in Chesterfield Street was one of the very few places in London where he cared to dine, indeed he had often said so. Their sympathy on the subject of antiques of all kinds was so eager, and their understanding on the demotic caligraphy and on hieroglyphics was so complete; but

still, the lively pleasure with which he thought of her arrival this morning, after reading Lady Daring's note, would have surprised her indeed !

Full of the highest buoyancy of hope he worked through a very stirring morning, going with Mr. Calthorpe to see the Vatican Obelisk, and various other points to which this gentleman, one of his familiar spirits at the British Museum, directed him, as a matter of course.

Mr. Calthorpe knew Rome well, and he thought he knew Adrian Dillon *au fond* ! "that dry fellow, crammed up with hieroglyphics ;" and the association of his friend with Egyptian puzzles in general was a thing of which Mr. Calthorpe could not easily rid himself. He felt obelisks, inscriptions, and hieroglyphics, to be a sort of mental sustenance for which he imagined Dillon's nature did constantly and insatiably crave.

And Adrian went on an Egyptian hunt accordingly with him this morning, because

he was evidently expected to wish to go, and because it is very difficult at all times, to rebel against the adoption of that particular *pose* which your friends imagine belongs to you, and from which they cannot separate you in their minds.

Through the glories of the bright Italian morning he went, while the sun danced round them with all the sweetness of the early southern spring ; while it danced upon everything, from the grim, old obelisk of St. Peter's Place to the great, snowy plumes of the two fountains' spray ; danced in the brown eyes of the beggar children, and on the gay uniforms of the soldiers, and on the cassocks of the many friars and priests who passed them on every side. It smiled and glistened—that wonderful morning sunshine of the early Roman spring—smiled and glistened, as if, in the softened shadows of the short winter, swept already away, it had gathered anew a perennial youth of joy and radiance, with which to break forth in all this gladness again.

And all the time, as Mr. Calthorpe led Adrian here and there, and as he went, because it was like a second nature to him, to gaze at trophies of the sphinx and of the vast Egyptian Unknown, all the while he did it mechanically, and not one bit with his real thoughts nor heart—because they were utterly out of sympathy with grim, stone inscriptions for the time being, and were bright and buoyant and dancing, in fantastic frolics of gladness, in unison with the spring sunshine, and its return of perennial youth.

Mr. Calthorpe never knew this; and perhaps it was just as well.

Finally they went for luncheon to the Casa Pia.

It was a pretty, little repast, as, with Lady Daring for hostess, might be assured. It was pretty, artistic, and excellently furnished, as well as lively and pleasant in every respect.

And this over, and much converse in the course of it achieved, coffee and delicate tobacco were supplied for an hour of repose in the divan, where the three gentlemen talked

on Indian politics, and on the wary Russian advances in the far east.

The two elder ladies the while repaired to the *salon*, and devoted themselves to the dextrous mutual unravelling of that complexity of character in each, to which Adrian had respectively referred.

And Car dreamily wandered about, from the flowers on the balcony to the flowers filling the room in profusion, finding apparently more interest in these vegetable developments than in converse of any kind, only watching furtively the clock the while, until the hour at last drew near at which her mother had ordered the carriage.

Then the smokers all came in from the divan, and from their Indian politics; and Sir Frederick's drawings and their lively interest, bearing upon all surrounding scenes and on many of the days' doings for all of them, became the subject of an interlude of general drawing-room "talk."

In the course of this it was discovered that the Honourable Philip Calthorpe, who was

really a very intellectual and cultivated man, wished, of all things, to visit once more the tomb of the baker Eurysaces, and that the comparatively modern shrines of Car's projects for pilgrimage had small interest for him. For how could the quite recent thought of Beatrice Cenci compete, in the mind of that class of scholar, with the interest of Atistia, the baker's wife, who lies beneath the tomb at the Porta Maggiore, and whose mortal remains, as we may actually know from that inscription read on the architrave, were poetically and suggestively deposited here in a bread-basket, in the days of imperial Rome.

Mr. Calthorpe decided unhesitatingly to accompany Sir Frederick along this his particular line of study that day. So the others remained a *parti carré*, a result of which Adrian had foreseen the possibility in his sudden joy over the Calthorpes, as over friends beloved that were lost and found again. This possibility foreseen had caused his undue rejoicings.

What a day they had !

Starting at once now, while it was still early—for they had had *déjeuner* in the foreign fashion at twelve o'clock.

Such a day, as dwells vivid in the heart's memories for ever ; that comes back at life's grayest moments, in all after-time, as with the sweep of the south wind laden with soft fragrance, brightening the horizon of the mind, and revealing stretches of lovely colouring, that abide for ever.

Such days enrich our lives !

It was charming even to bowl through the bright streets of that city, so gay and so full of colour and life ; to pass palaces and columns and churches all instinct with that universal interest which never dies ; to pass fountains innumerable, throwing up their bright, feathery spray continually—these sweet, fresh, fountain springs, which are the life of Rome.

The interest was endless, the charm and the brightness and the beauty unfailing at every point ; and the strongest charm of all,

that gave intensity to the joy of everything for the whole long afternoon, was, for those two, in each other, as they sat side by side on the front seat of the carriage, and enjoyed, while Lady Daring and Mrs. Calthorpe made pleasant talk for themselves, the interchange of those currents of sympathy in *speech* at length, which had already sprung up so quickly in subtle magnetic force—with the sense of strong, mutual attraction.

They went first to the great Palazzo Barbarini; to the grim, old, unbeauteous room where Beatrice holds her court of centuries. And Adrian met the world-famed gaze of those Cenci eyes, and—he appreciated.

But all sentiment was impossible, and still more so the expression thereof on that occasion and for the time being, for ‘La Beatrice’ was surrounded by a travelling gang, a terrible party, ‘specially’ and most vociferously conducted by an irrepressible British guide, who was gesticulating before the wondrous picture, and explaining its history and its supposed origin, giving volubly his opinion to

everybody, and acquainting the whole public within hearing, with his special views on 'Guider' in general, and upon this portrait in particular.

"This sort of thing ought to be put down," exclaimed Lady Daring indignantly.

And truly, why is it not?

After one silent look over the shoulders of the crowding, tourist gang—they slowly and reluctantly turned away.

"This 'Fornarina' looks different from the one at Florence," continued Lady Daring, indicating this other picture to Adrian, as she slowly passed along the room in deep disgust, "and I always think that Dürer's 'The Child Christ among the Rabbi' is most extraordinary, and, oh, of course, there are several more; but do let us go, please, this is too unbearable."

For the loud, harsh voice went on discanting, to the insult of the painter and of the lovely Cenci, unrestrained and at will.

"You must come again another day, Adrian, for you must see the library, when you can give it time."

So on they went to the Rospigliosi on the Quirinal, where, with "Aurora" scattering her flowers before the sunrise, and heralding the dancing Hours, they escaped the tourists and all 'specially conducted' corps—and where they spent a long, happy time.

Not entirely, too, because the gay procession on the Rospigliosi ceiling so entranced them (charming in its grace and vivacity, as the wonderful painting is), but because it was so pleasant, so remote from annoyance, so quiet in the stately rooms, in the bright, little Casino, and in the soft, green garden, with its magnolias and fish-ponds and orange-trees and lovely terrace view.

They lingered long, so charmed were they all; and then, because Lady Daring and Mrs. Calthorpe were growing just a little tired of each other, they went on to visit modern studios—for they had the *entrée* to all that were attractive.

Lady Daring often spent many hours in the studios, and often she bought wonderful and lovely things; and, besides, she was so

enthusiastic and appreciative that to all artists she was charming, and was everywhere a welcomed guest.

And now, that she and Mrs. Calthorpe had become a little *ennuyée* in those two mediæval palazzi, where only great pictures were to be seen with intolerable tourists inspecting them, she it was who suggested, that they should visit some new things for a change now ; things of art also, but in variety.

So they went to the beautiful studio of the sculptor who dwells near the Piazza dell' Indipendenza, and gazed, with a thrill of pride in the age that is with us now, and with a sense of joy in the realization, that the glorious genius which can breathe life and character into marble has not entirely fled from among men ; that in the works even of these masters of our modern times the majesty of a sculptured presence can still impress us, and the lines of a snowy form, still in its marble beauty, stir our hearts as we gaze on the Semiramide, the Gerusalemme, the Saul, the Salome, and the two great ones familiar to us

long ago—the Cleopatra and the Sybil, there where they stand or repose, in graceful, majestic ease, with many others as great as they are, in the still, cool seclusion of that studio, which in itself is worth a journey far to see.

They whirled on to the Villa Campana, where Naomi and the recumbent Eve are the centre of another studio full of many things of grace and charm.

And they went to several others, Mrs. Calthorpe regretting repeatedly, as they drove along, that, among the great names of sculpture, Miss Hosmer was absent this winter from Rome. She knew her intimately, and deplored her loss from among the studios with zeal.

Then they looked in pleasantly upon a few painters—some great ones, even though of to-day—and they went to look at Mazzolini's copies, too, and at La Signora Barberi's collection of her father's celebrated mosaics. Indeed, they visited many points of the current Roman interests of the day, until Car

protested that her real pilgrimage was being much disturbed, and its originally intended course sadly diverted.

And then Lady Daring said, as the sun began rapidly to go down,—

"Well, my dearest child, we have been in nearly every known corner of Rome ; but as there is so much still to be done, and so much we are leaving undone in our wandering course, let us show Adrian everything, once for all, and be done with it for good. Let us take him to the top of the tower of the Capitol, where we shall have this evening a beautiful view ; then home to tea, and no more for one day, I beg of you !"

"A very good idea," exclaimed Mrs. Calthorpe. "I have not been up there for years."

"Well, yes, it would be very nice," replied Car, but with hesitation. It was not quite her idea. "But, yes ; the view is always lovely. Would—Mr. Dillon like to go ?"

'Mr. Dillon' expressed his pleasure at being taken anywhere, and Lady Daring,

smiling at the demurely said 'Mr. Dillon,' asserted cheerfully that she knew 'cousin Adrian' would go anywhere they pleased.

So it was arranged. But Car said little more for a few minutes—she did not quite endorse the plan. And when her mother replied with the designation 'cousin Adrian,' she looked quite away from them to her side of the carriage, and said nothing!

'Cousin Adrian' was a form of address which, in this instance, she emphatically in her own mind, and tacitly to the world in general, declined to adopt. It suggested a compromise to her, between a brother and an uncle, which did not seem to suit him, to her thinking, in any way; and as she did not feel prepared to say 'Adrian,' as her mother did, and as 'Mr. Dillon' always came out with an effect of restraint and effort, she usually called him by no name, but indicated him generally successfully in a quaint little way of her own.

In her innermost thought of him she had

coined a little Italian expression by which she described him to her own self already.

It was 'Simpatico mio'—an expression absolutely inadmissible and ungrammatical from an Italian point of view, but giving a form, which pleased her curiously, to her feeling for him, and to her instinctive consciousness of his rapid understanding of her sentiments and thoughts.

'Simpatico mio.' But though she already always spoke of him to herself by this name, she had not come to saying it aloud as yet,—and nothing else seemed quite to suit !

She generally managed, without attracting attention. And as for him—as regards this point—it is doubtful if, on his part, he had ever yet called her by any name at all, save deep in those most hidden heart's depths, of which the expressions rarely will bear interpretation into common speech.

And yet, a good deal of the expression of those hidden depths had escaped forth into light that day.

How sweet it had all been ; how they had

talked !—sometimes with swift and rapid confidences ; sometimes in words hesitating, half-restrained, and low. How they had gone on incessantly ‘telling each other things,’ as Car described it ; and how bright and charming all the time had she been ! So many things they had murmured ; so much had come up to say.

And in all the variety of scenes that had surrounded them too, as they went in and out, alighting from the carriage at so many different doors, and getting into it again ; in the little intervals as they swept along the viali from one point to another, and leant, each side by side, on the sloping cushions of the seat opposite Mrs. Calthorpe and Lady Daring ; as they went a little way up the old, winding, stone stairs of the Barbarini just to explore, and for the mere fun of going together, ‘like two inquisitive children,’ as Lady Daring exclaimed, ‘bent on investigating everything ;’ as they managed to stray away a few paces from the other two in the soft bit of green orange-garden at the Rospigliosi,

and among the great white statues in the studio near the Piazza dell' Indipendenza,— and in every sort of odd moment and odd place, again and again.

They seemed idly and happily to stray through the bright afternoon—going from scene to scene of fresh wonder and interest, and in each scene finding themselves straying towards each other, always arriving at just having some little thing which they drew aside to tell, and acquiring in each palazzo, studio, or gallery, some little reminiscence, some fresh saying from his lips or from hers, to linger among the sweet memories stored up in their associations with these scenes for ever.

And how delightfully variable, too, he had found her; how under each new influence she had changed from one mood, that seemed sweet beyond words to him, to another that charmed him still more!

In the old Barbarini a soft gravity had fallen over her for a little while, and a sort of gentle pathos had crept into her voice and

eyes ; and, notwithstanding the harsh jarring tones in which the cicerone was haranguing before the *pittura dolorosa*, her spirit had been swayed, while she stood there, as with a wave of passionate feeling, which she could scarce control.

She had stood just at his shoulder,—in that silence with which their particular group had been forced to pay their visit to the Barbarini Sala.

But as she stood there, and they had all gazed from behind the circle of crowding tourists, he had known and actually felt, in his strong sympathy with her, the quiver of feeling that had thrilled through her frame ; he had heard the quick, tremulous sigh, almost a sob, rising like a wave which must break and have its way ; and the pathos which weighted her heart seemed to pass with swift force of deep affinity to his, and he had suddenly to turn and walk away from her and from the Cenci, and to pass his strong hand across his eyes for a moment in a quick, sharp struggle for self-control.

Then they had wandered up the old stairs that little way, until Lady Daring recalled them, and gathered them back into the carriage. But, as they went, they had told each other, in a few murmured words, a little of the strong feeling that had swayed them then.

At the Rospigliosi her mood had all changed, and she was a very sun-ray for brightness; for, as the soft summer clouds shift and skim before a sunny breeze, so the temper of her mind had altered as they drove over the grand open Piazza of the Quirinal; and as they paused before the great horse-tamers, those glorious old trophies of the virile strength and indomitable courage and graceful vigour of the Greeks, who had been the ideal and the model of the Romans who made Rome; and as she looked across the bright stretch of view, and up to the dancing rays of the fountain's silver plume, her spirit lost its burden of pathos, and was sunlit and joyous once more.

In the Palazzo of the Aurora she was gay and full of gladness, like those maidens of

the sun, who, with tread so buoyant, swell
Aurora's train.

And she laughed with such a ring of youth and merriment in her tone, as she made him crack his neck in the fruitless effort to see the picture fairly from the centre of the room, and beguiled him into every one of the four corners, to catch new views and lights on it, because, she insisted, "it was too prosaic" to sit down solemnly, as Lady Daring and Mrs. Calthorpe did, in front of the slanting mirror which is provided with such courteous forethought for the aching head and eyes and neck-bones of many tourists, and which reflects the picture, without the pain of gazing up—"too prosaic," she said, "for words."

So passed the whole afternoon, in the same blissful, versatile way.

. "Changeful as the shade
By the light, quivering aspen made,"

so he found her; and with every varying mood he was charmed anew.

By the time Lady Daring had exhausted her favourite studios, and her patience, they had gone on a long way towards the meeting of the "psychai," and they felt—as they drove towards the Capitol, and as the sunset began to deepen softly around them, and they knew their day of pilgrimage was nearly done—they felt that they had known one another a very long time, and—that they knew each other well !

The conversation during the latter stage, on the sloping front seat of the barouche, had become fluent and friendly, passing easily from each to each without any effort, and with confidence that was quite spontaneous.

And Lady Daring, as she sat opposite to them, exchanging social gossip and early reminiscences and family scandal with Mrs. Calthorpe, thought 'how young and bright and handsome Adrian looked,' and 'how pleasant he could be when it suited him,' and 'how good-natured it was in him, for old, cousinly affection's sake, and for old sentiment's sake, to be so particularly nice and

lively with that dreamy, enthusiastic, variable child of hers'—to whom this lionizing of her cousin Adrian appeared to afford an amusement which was quite remarkable. It really brightened her, and did her good.

Lady Daring was quite curiously unconscious! Her view of the fixed divisions of generations made her so. Adrian belonged to her own life and bygone history, to her own youth, to a time to which she looked back as not far distant certainly, but still as at that point of prospect which made him of her generation and middle-aged.

And Car, though of years to be *rangée* truly (under careful guidance), was still a child, to her feeling, and also, as she supposed, to Adrian, he being contemporary with herself. A dreamy child, she thought, with no idea of 'such things,' quite unconscious of herself—of the force and power and beauty of her vivid glance, of her quick, winsome gestures, of her eager and fervent speech,—knowing nothing.

And she was so—as unconscious and as

♦

spontaneous, as unpremeditated and uncalculating of effects and results, as her mother thought her.

But still, Lady Daring was unwise to forget, that at Car's age, she had had more than one, two, or three impassioned experiences of the power of the love-god and of the strength of her own armoury from his gifts; and that when she first looked into those blue, star-eyes of her lovely child at Poonah, just nineteen years ago, she was exactly two years older than was Car at present—and she had lived through a very great deal.

Ah, well! very few of the lovely, luxuriant blossoms of the passion flower, in its most sensitive and ethereal form, would ever bloom into perfection (because of the continuous watching of their growth) did not people now and then, just so, amiably forget.

That afternoon's sunlight would never have been allowed to shed such golden beams upon the memory and the associations of everything and of every moment for those two, if Lady Daring had remembered all that it

would have been her wisdom, no doubt, to have kept in mind. But she did not, and they were so very happy.

And last of all came the sunset from the Capitol.

This is a view, which must once be seen, if we would desire the memory of that wondrous city to dwell like a living presence within our hearts; to rise again and again, and ever new, like a wave of passion, like a throb of life, when some one whispers the name of 'Roma,' and the heart sees it once more.

That glorious poet-land of the Campagna, stretching away from Cape Linaro to Terracina, and from the mountains to the sea. That circlet of the immortal hills—immortal while the world endures, living since it began to be—encircling the ancient Etruria, Latium, and the land of the Sabines. There they stand, unchanging where all is changed; the hills that were the pride of Horace, the dream of Dante, and the joy of Raphael's seraphic eyes. They encircle still the great

city, the glory of all the earth, the centre of history for three thousand years; that city which, with those other two, Athens and Jerusalem, complete the triune of immortality, to which gravitate all the loftiest thoughts, the greatest memories, the deepest passions, of countless generations of men.

The city beneath the sunset lay like a pearl of wonder around the Capitol—which stands between the mediæval and the classic, between the Cæsars and the Popes. The gaze ranges over all, from ruins to palaces, from domes to columns, from arches to basilica, over via and piazza; from all the glitter and the splendour of what is, and what was, and what yet may come,—away to that blue range of unchanging glory, where Soracte rears his royal head, a king in that world of nature, which remains immovable, while dynasties sweep on.

How lovely they were that afternoon—the whole, wonderful range—with a sky of crimson above them, burnished to golden fire round the

disc of the sinking sun ; with a deep, azure glow, falling like the veil of night over the summit and the slope of the mountains ; and with clouds, tinged with orange and purple and gold, rolling up slowly towards the south-east, where the peak of Gennaro, the famed Lucretilis of Horace, towered above Monticelli and Poggio Cesi, and above St. Angelo in Capoccia—the ‘ Montes Corniculani ’ of the ancient time.

From the volcanic mountains about the lake of Bracciano, right round the circlet of wonder, to the soft, blue outline of the Albano Hills, the view was clear and beautiful ; and Tiber slowly rolled, like a thread of burnished amber, across the crescent to the sea ; and Anio, flowing from amid the distant olive-slopes, mingled her feebler current with the monarch stream ; and castles and monasteries and villages towered above the rocks among the vineyards and in the nestling woods ; and Frascati and Tusculum and Tivoli stood out in spots of vivid light ; and all glowed and shone in the splendour of the sunset, like a

vision of apocalyptic glory, and a dream of the city of the blest.

And they all gazed and said little, only sought each other's eyes in gladness, and then gazed and gazed again; until, all suddenly, the sun sank, and the cities of the mountains vanished from their view, and the glow chilled around them, and the night-veil fell lower, and the clouds swept heavily up the sky; and the old ruins far beneath them became as dull, dead things, full of shadow and darkness; and the 'Pride of the Popes' grew sombre and gray, and the mighty dome above that mausoleum of mystery loomed heavily against the fading sky—and they turned a little sadly to descend the tower again, for they knew then, that it was done, their pilgrimage was over—their day of glory was gone!

CHAPTER IX.

“WE HAVE SEEN THE WONDER—WHAT IS THE
GOOD?”

THE dusk was gathering quickly around them again as they drove home; the soft, violet-hued dusk of the short Italian twilight, so short as it is between sunshine and stars, an insidious, dangerous time, while the violet veil falls softly, and the mist creeps upward from the sun-scorched soil.

Home they whirled “to tea,” as Lady Darling said, as fast as possible, and without much converse at first on any subject, because they had seen so much and done so much during the long afternoon that it seemed difficult to talk of anything, there was so much to think, so much to feel, and because

their hearts were still full with the glory of that wondrous sunset view ; and their eyes, as they looked silently one upon the other, were still glistening and bright, full of the soft, gleaming reflection of that glory which had rested on the city and the hills.

The thing was all too much, Lady Daring felt. They had overdone it ; and as for that *sensible* child of hers, she could see that the keen, eager young mind was worked up to a pitch several chords too high. Lady Daring deprecated at all times avowedly what she called “ this kind of thing.” Partly because of the intense sensibility of which she was conscious within herself, and which it had been one of her life-rules at all times to hold in firm control. And because she liked to blow away a cloud of too weighty feeling, when she felt it threaten to gather with an oppressive influence upon the bright surface of her own happy spirit, or on the circle of conversation about her ; she disliked, she said, “ to feel it in the air.”

It was a quality of character, this, which

belonged to her maturer life, in contradiction to the intense, perhaps overstrained love, of the same kind of thing in Car.

Youth is diffident of showing feeling sometimes, but is never afraid of it. It goes forth to seek and meet and welcome all the strong influences of scenery, art, thought, beauty of every kind, which may touch and develop into quick and living sensibility all the latent faculty for feeling within itself; and youth glories with ineffable enjoyment in each new discovery of what has power to thrill the heart, to vibrate over the fine chords of the spirit, to deepen the glow in eyes just awakening, and to warm the quick flush upon the cheek.

Youth has a fine eager courage in 'giving away' its own self, which is lessened as life goes on.

So the sort of dreamy silence into which they fell began after a little while to be oppressive to Lady Daring from her point of view, and she at last exclaimed, just as they turned into the Corso,—

"Really, it is all too much of a good thing!"

She stooped forward as she spoke, and laid her hand on Car's.

The girl was looking away into the dusk at the moment, but as her mother said this she turned and looked at her with a wonderful gleam of dewy light in her great eyes.

"Too much for *you*, little girl," Lady Daring went on; "we might have spared ourselves that clamber up those old stairs, and gone home an hour ago."

"Oh, no!" Car exclaimed.

"I would not have missed that last hour for a great deal," Adrian echoed; "it has been something to be remembered."

"Certainly very fine," Mrs. Calthorpe said.

"Yes," murmured Lady Daring, and her colour rose slightly as she looked at him and caught his eager glance, and felt a memory stirred by his aspect—a memory not, too, of him entirely, but—of a long ago. "It is

something quite by itself, that view from the Capitol, the mountains, the Campagna, the city and the sun, altogether a grand combination; but—”

“We have not really done too much, *madre mia*,” murmured Car, “and to-morrow we shall begin again.”

“To-night, my dear, you mean! We have to go, as perhaps you forget, to a dinner and an evening party, which cannot be given up; besides—”

“Dear me, you do ‘go the pace,’ you two here at Rome,” exclaimed Mrs. Calthorpe. “Art and sight-seeing all day long, and society all night, *Vere?* Yes, certainly, I should say that was too much of every kind of good thing.”

“So much so,” said Lady Daring, laughing a little, “that I often wonder if art *is* a good thing. Sight-seeing, I am quite convinced, is not.”

“But then there is so much to see,” said Mrs. Calthorpe in a slightly perplexed tone. “Of course it is bad—what with fevers and

all that—but then, there it is, and one has got to see it; but I confess I often wish there was not so much."

"Here, or in the world generally?" replied Lady Daring, with much real sympathy in her glance, as she turned to Mrs. Calthorpe, who went on,—

"Oh, in the world—I mean, taking it generally. Here, one can get through with a little patience and time—we did all this years ago, and it seems all easy enough now; but think of Philip and me, we have been fifteen years going about together you know, and we have seen so much—so much. There was India, and there was Egypt—you know what *that* was, Mr. Dillon—and now it is Greece. Oh, I often think it is rather a pity there is such a very great deal."

"Well, even here at Rome," returned Lady Daring, "I think, as far as art goes, there is pretty well enough, and 'the good of it' is what I many times question. Adrian," she added suddenly, "you are a thinker, what is the good of art?"

"You mean the mission?" he said.

"Oh, mission is such a big word; I like the simple query, what is the good of it? what does it mean?"

"The craving for perfection, the presentation of perfection, and the outward and appreciable expression of the sentiment, with which the vision of perfection fills the great artist-soul," he answered in a meditative tone, as if searching within his own definite thought and experience on the subject, for an exact and definite answer to her words.

Car looked round on him now with a brighter gleam than ever of sweet and dewy light suffusing her eyes.

"Yes," responded Lady Daring doubtfully, "a broad interpretation, but difficult, *mon cousin*, if we ruminate on the facts—and not one to apply in detail."

"Applicable to the Madonna of mediæval dreams, perhaps," said Mrs. Calthorpe, "not always to the inspiration of the Elysian vision. 'Perfection,' Cliomenes bequeathed to

us; but, as you say, Vere, it is difficult to define 'the good.'"

"It is good," he asserted, "for the mental tone of the whole race of man to behold, and to stand in the presence of embodied perfection, wrought out by the supreme effort of our brother man, enduring centuries after his own personality and even the certainty of his name is quite lost to us, remaining as the highest reach of a fallen humanity to grasp the conception—even of a physically perfect being. It is good, but, like much of highest good, cannot always be coldly defined in speech."

"The theory applies to every art, I imagine," said Mrs. Calthorpe. "Dear me, and there are so many—past, present, and perhaps to come. They crowd upon us here at Rome: the art of painting, the art of sculpture, the art of building, art of preserving, art of—"

"Oh, innumerable!" exclaimed Lady Daring, laughing again, "and now we are applying our energies on all sides to their

understanding and their revival, and to the re-teaching of them again ; and all the while, the first of all, the ' Art of Life,' is too much forgotten to my thinking, and we are left to stumble into the knowledge of that, my dear Adela, just by the blundering, dusky pathway of experience, because we have no sort of rule of any kind, and, young enough, no school."

" Oh, I think—" began Car hesitatingly, and with a bright flush mounting to her cheek.

But the remark of Lady Daring had caught Mrs. Calthorpe's fancy, and she laughed and answered in a lively tone—scarcely having noticed that Car *felt* something she fain would say.

" In the ' Art of Life ' we may have many masters, Vere, only we none of us will learn. No school of a life-art can teach us, what will save us from our mistakes. Eh, do you think so ? "

" I think we *might* know more of the art of living before we plunged overhead into

life," said Lady Daring, "if any one of us could be brought to realize, all there *is* to know, about ourselves I mean, and about the world we have got to live in; what our best faculties are, and how to use them; what we *can* do, what we *may* enjoy, what may be won with effort; and further," she continued, "if we were taught to realize all that cannot at any time be ours, and what had best be left alone. In fact, I think if we were shown, as an art of life at an early age, all our own possibilities and our limits, we might be saved many painful mistakes."

"But people are so various in their views," said Mrs. Calthorpe, "I suppose you would call the art of life, the art of succeeding? Well, then, every one would differ in the point of desired success. One, would call the art of life the power of ruling in politics, in public or private affairs; and others, the faculty for dining, and ordering dinner well every day; so, as you came to the organization of your life-school, you would disagree with every sort of person, at the outset,

upon the rules and objects and motive power, you see, and you would never be able to decide if it were to be governed by a prime minister or a *cordon-bleu*."

"Oh, but—" Car murmured low, with her eyes seeking her mother's face now, because they had spoken of this subject very often before, "surely there is, there has been, a teaching of the art of life, the presentation of the perfection, and the giving forth of its motive power and laws."

"Not one to fit our present modern world, as far as I know," continued Mrs. Calthorpe, whose ear or perceptions had not quite caught the drift of Car's thoughts just then. "The demand would be," she continued, "for one who had the key to the enigma of success, in career of whatever kind you please, a prime minister, or a great 'social power'—in either case a master of conspicuous and brilliant action. A sure prophet of results on the one hand, and a *connoisseur* of mere *savoir-vivre* on the other. Those would divide

the votes of the civilized and æsthetic world."

"And yet," murmured Car again, "He *has* been—" and she turned to look out into the darkness again, and she added a word low to herself, as Mrs. Calthorpe and Lady Daring talked on, and as Adrian in silence leant back, with folded arms, on the sloping seat by her side.

That evening Adrian dined with the Calthorpes again, at their little round table in the corner of the *table-d'hôte* room, and he went upstairs and remained until a late hour with them, discussing Grecian coinage, and admiring the pottery from the Grecian tombs anew; for the Darings dined that night, as Vere had said, with the ambassador for Austria, and went on afterwards to a reception at the Quirinal.

So there was no possibility of giving invitations to any of the favoured trio at the Albergo Parigi to go to the Casa Pia at all that night, for no one was at home there

till two in the morning, and the large *salon* where dwelt the Pleyel piano and the Roman sketches was in darkness and deserted for the night.

So the party at the Parigi were perforce obliged to make themselves happy together, and very happy did Adrian find himself indeed.

For, quite afresh, it seemed to him again, 'How very pleasant were the Calthorpes!—how cultivated, how understanding, how suggestive!'—and most particularly was Mrs. Calthorpe sympathetic to his mood and mind that night.

People closely concerned in a romance are often marvellously tardy in discernment of much that may be developing rapidly around them. And, in proportion, people quite coolly interested, quite remotely concerned, have perceptions preternaturally acute.

So Mrs. Calthorpe 'saw everything,' while Lady Daring merely observed vaguely to herself, the amiability of Adrian, and com-

mended him thereupon in her own mind. Mrs. Calthorpe saw and wondered at her friend's unconsciousness; saw, and speculated how it would all end—for she knew Lady Daring was ambitious, and she knew that Adrian Dillon was poor.

'Time would show,' she thought—'the events of the next few days would declare much; meanwhile, it was very interesting, and she was glad they had come on to Rome.'

The Darings were so sociable, and so easy, in that pleasant eastern way of theirs, of taking sociability and frequent intercourse for granted, when their tastes were pleased.

The Casa Pia was so exceptionally attractive, as a morning or evening resort, their circle was unquestionably well chosen and good; and Car was charming, and Mr. Dillon she had always sincerely liked. So the whole thing was interesting, and little Mrs. Calthorpe was extremely pleased.

Living love, and living beings, are after all more interesting to watch in their ways,

with all their conflicting and erratic uncertainty of action and results, than the finest Grecian trophies of research, or the tombs of all the most thrilling histories lived out long ago. So Mrs. Calthorpe, knew, and saw enough, to induce her to make herself pleasant, with quite unwonted attraction, to Adrian. She talked brightly through the whole evening of their friends of the Casa Pia; of the day just past; of the projected days to come,—and of Car herself, too, in a guarded and very interesting way, that showed quick perception and fine instinct on her part,—which he much appreciated!

And, further, she never once made allusion to Lord Farnham, although she had heard from the tutor of that young peer during the evening, even while Adrian sat there with her, and though the letter said that Lord Farnham would leave Naples and travel to Rome on the morrow; to-morrow night, at latest, he would be on his way.

She never mentioned him—but directly, or indirectly, *à propos* to everything, from a

Grecian signet-gem to an Athenian tomb, she managed to talk of the Darings continually, and of Car in particular, in some pleasing, half-veiled half-expressed, and flattering way.

So Adrian left them late, feeling he had spent an exceptionally pleasant evening in their *salon*.

CHAPTER X.

SIMPATICA.

THE next morning, the Thursday, the fourth golden day, when the sun had risen gloriously again, and was flooding the city in that glad spring light, Adrian found Car, buying her flowers in the Piazza.

It was like that Monday morning, that very first day, when he had leant on the Barcaccia fountain, and she had come down the Spanish Steps.

The little flower-cart, with the ancient and classical-looking 'Nonna,' with the brown-faced, blue-shirted boy, and the lovely bambino, had come in again, and, laden high with scarlet lilies and white hyacinths, and all the sweet bright flowers of the Italian

spring, was drawn up once more between the fountain and the stairs.

Many other flower-sellers with laden basket and piled-up donkey-carts crowded the Piazza, and vociferated their praise of their sweet-scented loads; but none were so picturesque as that tiny *charrette*—drawn by the little, rough, brown ass, carrying the bambino enthroned among the flowers, and with the dramatic and excitable grandmother gesticulating and vociferating alternate appeals to the sauntering public, and shrewd exhortations and scoldings to the small, brown-faced boy.

Adrian came out from the hotel door at an early forenoon hour, and hesitated a moment, glancing up the slopes of the Pincian, and then down the Via di S. Sebastiano towards the Spanish Place.

Where should he direct his steps? Where take his morning stroll?

Round the obelisk of Antinous, on the height there, or down among the flower-sellers at Bernini's fountain? Really, he

ought to have gone up, for obelisks had been sadly neglected during the last two days, and those inscriptions were not yet copied which he had come to see and to compare. But he did not go, Fate decided for him.

The Piazza lay beneath the Casa Pia windows at least, his footsteps turned leisurely there. He took out a cigarette, he tipped his hat low over his eyes, for the sunlight was strong and radiant, he pulled his long bronze moustache in a meditative absent manner, and he strolled along until he reached Piali's corner in this way, meditative, rather uncertain (or believing that he was uncertain) why he went.

He was grave, and his eyes, spite all the glad sunshine and the brightness of the scene, sought the ground as he walked—descending slowly the slope of the narrow way.

Then at the corner he paused; he looked up, and a sweet smile of infinite softness quivered over his lips and lit up the wonted gravity of

his eyes. He looked round. How bright it all was this morning; how *riante*, how full of life and movement and light, and how glad he felt amidst it all! What a strange, sweet happiness possessed him; how far, had gone away from him already, that narrow, concentrated, dull-souled personality, which had so lately been himself!

That day just passed over them, the day of pilgrimage yesterday, what a golden memory it must ever be!

And now it was morning; another day had been given to them—more sunshine, fresh beginnings of intercourse, of enjoyment, of continued recognition of their two selves.

He looked round, and the brightness of all was delightful to him, and memory and anticipation met, in that sweet, soft glance in his eyes and smile.

He was awaiting Fate—for just a moment—with the deep, blissful instinct that it would not fail.

And, accordingly, it more than met him, it

surpassed in its wealth of gift all that he was gazing forth to see.

There she came, bright as the morning, sweet and proud, and fair as the Roman lily on its graceful stem.

There she came across the Piazza, walking slowly, with the white-fringed parasol held low upon her shoulder, making a background of softened light, and a frame and setting for her delicate fair face.

She came alone, and had half crossed the Piazza towards her favourite group of the 'Nonna' and the brown boy and the bambino, before she observed him approaching from his side.

Suddenly she saw him, and she paused. He came straight across to her, nearing the fountain and the foot of the Spanish Steps.

She waited; and in a moment they were standing, silent as yet, facing one another, with a bright morning greeting in the dancing, happy light in their eyes. Then she put her left hand into his right, with a quick, impulsive gesture—a pretty way she had of

giving a silent salutation, which bore much expression.

"Well," he said, "you finished the pilgrimage at the shrine of highest fashion last night?"

"We did—it was beautiful at the Quirinal. I do wish you had been there."

"So do I," he answered, smiling a bright response of pleasure at her words, "so do I, indeed!"

"But it is always beautiful here," she went on, "everywhere. How delicious it is now, this morning! Will you come and help me to buy my flowers?"

"May I? There is nothing I should like so much."

"Oh, but you want to go off, I know, to one of your obelisks or pyramids."

"I go to no pyramid," he answered, "until you feel disposed to fulfil your promise."

"Oh, the Caius Cestius—yes, I wonder—what do you think; might we go to-day? Oh, if mother only would, I should so enjoy it—to go on with the pilgrimage, you know."

"But there are social affairs, no doubt, to be remembered. Can you be emancipated, do you think, for yet another day?"

"‘Yet another day,’" she echoed, quoting one of her own little favourite songs, which he did not, very naturally, know,—“‘yet another day,’" and her voice fell softly on the words, as she repeated them low to herself again.

"Yet one more glorious day," he answered, "like yesterday; when, indeed, as it seemed to me, we touched the very cloud-lands of Paradise on the grand, old tower up there."

"Its brightness dawned with Aurora at the Rospigliosi," she replied, smiling up at him again, and catching the tone of his words. "Beatrice made me so sad. Aurora was all gladness; a sort of morning of spirit-light came with her, and so it was only poetically harmonious, you see, that it should have been a sort of Elysian sunset for us at the end of Aurora's day."

"Talking pictures," he said, with a soft gleam quivering in his eyes as they rested

upon her, and as he saw how hers wandered for a moment quite dreamily away.

“Ah, this is not a morning for day-dreaming,” she said quickly, and with a low laugh she turned a little from him, and looked brightly across the Piazza. “This is always such a busy morning with me—Thursday. My dear flower-family come from Viagia, on the Campagna; they come twice a week, and I fill all the rooms quite fresh and gay again on their days. Will you come? Look, the old Nonna is signing to us; she thinks I have forgotten her, and she is afraid that all her best flowers will be gone.”

They crossed the Piazza now, and he “helped her,” as she said, to buy her lilies and hyacinths and great, scented bunches of sweet violets, and other bright spring flowers. And he stood close by her while she talked in soft Italian to the old woman, who, with much vehement vociferation, pressed upon her many and various bunches of special merit, which she declared had been reserved carefully for her.

“No one was to have these beautiful amaryl-

lis but the bella Principessa Inglese and this lovely handful of snowy hyacinths had been hidden away behind the basket of the bambino for her, that no one might take it away; and the violets produced from beneath a cool layer of green leaves were finer, a great deal larger, fresher, and more fragrant than any other she would be able to buy."

All this was poured out to Car in the eager, passionate "*lingua Romana*," with flashes that were wonderful to behold from the old, black, brilliant eyes, and with many a dramatic gesture as well. And Car smiled, and answered back the eager flash of the Italian eyes with a merry glance from her own bright orbs—as she bought, and went on buying, until Adrian could carry no more! until her hands, as well as his, were full of lilies and hyacinths and great bunches of sweet violets, purple and white and lilac, and until every *scudo* was spent, and the boy's little brown fist full of small, shining coin.

And then she stooped over the laughing child, whose soft face and auriol of gold-

brown curls shone among the lilies, and she smiled into the baby-eyes so sweetly, that the little thing put up its two chubby hands and clapped them together, and laughed and crowed aloud. And then, as Car still bent and brushed its peachy cheek with a fresh dew-dropped rose, the little lovely thing suddenly touched her cheek in return, softly and shyly, with his tiny fingers, as if, in its pearly fairness and delicate bloom, it was a sort of wonder to him, filling him with a childish curiosity and delight.

“The little rascal,—he is courageous!” cried the old Nonna, with pretended horror at the freedom taken by the little one with the English ‘Principessa’s’ soft, blooming cheek, but with much real pride and joy. The beauty of her bambino caught many a foreign gaze to her little *charrette*, and attracted as many buyers of the violets and the spring roses and lilies as Peppino’s cry of “Fiori, bei fiori, dolce mammo!” or her own vociferous toutings of her floral wares. She knew the beautiful English ‘Prin-

cipessa' did not mind the touch of the soft baby-fingers at all. Yet another *scudo* was found for the *bambinetto*, and put daintily into his little widespread hand, and Car turned and laughed back now at Adrian, who exclaimed with amusement, as the tiny fist closed and held the coin so tight,—

“Worthy and promising scion of a most successfully acquisitive race,” he said. “Already the little atom knows the value of a *scudo*. Hold it fast, young one. Look how proud the grand old dame is, too, of the infant talent. She is just like the sorceress of Horace, is she not?”

“Yes, she might have stood as model for the *Canidia* we saw yesterday in Mr. Story's studio,” said Car, turning towards him now, and smiling her ‘*addio*’ for the day to the children and the brown donkey with some reluctance. “And, for all we can tell, perhaps she did; you know, all these people about here are ready to be models at a moment's notice, and can personate, too, such wonderful things. Good-bye till Mon-

day," she added, nodding once more a bright farewell to the group, as she turned across the Piazza with Adrian once more.

"Oh, we have found lovely flowers this morning!" she exclaimed, as she looked from the great bunches of violets in her own hands to the branching, scarlet lilies and hyacinths in his. "How good of you to carry them for me. Do you mind?" she said.

"I like it," he replied. "I never realized flowers in such a luxury of quantity before."

"Oh, I do love them in a quantity like this; and in Italy, flowers are like a part of one's natural life. It would not seem really Italy without them. Do you not love them?" she asked suddenly.

"Flowers? Yes, of course; I think I do," he answered. "Yes, certainly, I do, now I realize them."

"You have not thought much about them, you mean—not all this time?"

"Not all these London years. Well, no; flowers, winter sunshine, music, art—how

much more, I wonder!—I lost somewhere, at some time of my life; and I have had to come to find them all, all once more again, at Rome.”

“So many things have been found at Rome; is it not so?” she said, beginning a little in her dreamy way again. “So many things found; a few things lost, too, which I wonder sometimes if they will ever really find here again.”

“Yes?” he answered hesitatingly, in a tone of inquiry, for he did not follow her thought, and he paused.

They had turned back again, to cross the Piazza, towards her door, and they had reached the fountain, and by its brink together now they paused. They rested their burden of sweet fragrance and bright colour upon the fountain’s marble edge, and they looked one another in the eyes for one moment, and then round the Piazza with its crowd and its sunshine, and its light and shade—with its crowds of many kinds, of many nations, of many occupations, of divers aspect, and of infinite variety of grade.

Close by where they stood together at that moment, while Car spoke, while she had looked round and repeated, "yes, some things lost," there was passing by them a Franciscan begging friar—one of those beings who lend much to the picturesque in the crowds that fill the gay streets of Rome—a brown-frocked, barefooted, unwashed monk, with shaggy beard and uncovered head, with the wretched, unkempt, unpleasing aspect which these devotees of that wondrous old order present more than any other—men who seem to have stepped down from out the fresco in the Santa Croce at Florence, where they stand immortalized in groups round their founder's bed. While St. Francis d'Assisi lies dying, with the beauty of perennial youth upon his radiant brow—the monks group around him, all of them looking—spite their age of 600 years—exactly as they still look (surely the self-same men), as they pace the Corso or the Lung Arno or the Giardino of Genova la Superba on a fine morning, or in a soft sunset hour.

Ragged, unkempt, unwashed, most unidealized, unethereal men !

Car sighed in that quick, eager way of hers, when anything oppressed or much moved her, as her gaze followed the weary-looking form, dragging its heavy footsteps across the sunlit Piazza now. And she softly shook her head and was silent.

She did not immediately continue her thought to Adrian, nor tell him what she felt was "lost at Rome;" but presently he said—for he too was following with his gaze the brown, slowly-retreating figure of the Franciscan brother—a figure indeed who, with all of his or like orders, monk or nun, never fails to chain the gaze, and arrest wandering, speculative thought amid the busiest or gayest Italian crowd. Presently Adrian said,—

"That is a being of whom I have often heard, of whom I have often read, and whom I have never seen until I came to Italy. But he has come into my head so frequently in the course of my life that he seems an

old familiar acquaintance to me all the same."

"When," Car answered, "when did you think of him? What made *you* do it also, often, before you came here?"

"What made me think of Francis d'Assisi and of Santa Teresa?" he answered,—“for I included her in my reflections, too—and, see, there are her representatives,” he added, “there.” He pointed across towards the foot of the Scala, where two closely-hooded nuns, of sombre hue and saddening aspect, were beginning a long, slow ascent. “There, yes; I have often thought of them all, and theorized according to my lights.”

“When?” repeated Car, in her soft insistent way again.

He coloured slightly.

“You alluded to it distantly yesterday,” he continued, “when you said, quite low, but I heard you, ‘*Ecce homo*,’ you said just the two words; we were talking of art, do you remember, and the purpose of art to present perfection and the highest art, which

your mother called in pleasantry ‘the art of life;’ and Mrs. Calthorpe said, ‘and who the artist?’—meaning the expert and accomplished—from a politician to a *cordon-bleu*, and you—I noticed it—perhaps the others did not, you coloured so quickly, as if the saying pained you.”

“It did,” she softly said, and she bent over the fountain’s edge as he went on, and gazed into the water’s depths.

“I saw it,” he continued, “and I heard your words. The Master of the Art of Life? you would have said; there has been but One.”

“Only one great Founder of the school,” she replied, warming up suddenly in her quick, enthusiastic way, and turning her great blue eyes upon him, laden with eager feeling, full of understanding, of earnestness, and of intense satisfaction as well, because *he* had seen so quickly yesterday, and had caught her thought.

“Yes,” he continued, “I heard, and I understood you, and I said to myself, we

must follow that out some day; because I remembered how often the words had come to me as I read and speculated, and how emphatically I had rejected them, because of the result of their fulfilment—their ultimate most uncompromising and unqualified fulfilment here. I thought often of *your* School for the Life-Art, and rejected it, because St. Francis and Santa Teresa are the end to which it leads, to which it must inevitably lead, if followed sincerely and without any compromise of expediency, to the end.”

Car's eyes, resting eagerly, full of intense and wistful inquiry upon him as he spoke, now wandered a little away from his face. She turned from the fountain and looked up and around, the sort of distant dreaminess, over which her mother so often wondered, coming slowly like a veil, or like a curious new light rather, into her gaze—a look which was peculiar to her in some of her dreamy moods. It seemed to veil her thoughts away, and yet gave a lovely expression of inner brightness to her countenance, which

even in silence said much of peace and sweetness, and was a language in itself.

“ Ah, that is just what I meant,” she said ; “ while they have found so much, and kept so much, *that* has been lost, at Rome.”

“ Yes ? ” he assented, with inquiry in his tone again. He had his own thoughts, but he wished to hear what were hers.

“ There has been so much,” she continued, “ of all beauty and perfection brought to this wonderful Rome. Here have been the perfect schools and the embodied models of all that is quite perfection in painting, in sculpture, and in glorious buildings, that have their own wondrous speech, in which unutterable things have been spoken to us for centuries ; and grand ideals in character, too, in heroism, in human greatness of thought and accomplished deed, that has made history for all time. And, besides all these, there seems to me there was brought here once, to the Appii Forum, out there on the Appian Way, the only great teaching of the Art of Life, with all its wondrous laws ; and the Art and

the Model and the Ideal were given to Rome, with all else that is perfect and great,—and it was lost, almost immediately, and through centuries of search and struggle they have never here found it again.”

“And yet, *here* the model was revived so often—again and again closely copied and revived,” he said. “The Franciscan, the Santa Teresa, the misericordian friars, surely they come nearer your ideal Example than anything the world has ever seen since—His time?”

“When I first saw them,” said Car, “I used to feel always sad; and it was just for that reason,—because I felt it, as you say. And then, one day, I was in a small copyist’s studio in the Trastevere, where ‘la madre’ and I often go, and I was looking at the photograph of a copy of the Sistine Madonna at Dresden, which belonged to our poor little artist friend. I know the Sistine Madonna, I cannot tell you of its wonders—the heavenly, unspeakable charm of the lovely perfect thing, the picture of Raphael, the ‘divina

pittore,' as they should call him, as Dante is their 'divina poeta.' I can see it now, if I close my eyes, but I cannot tell you what it is, to *feel*. And that photograph, it had the form and outline of the figure, but it had not one shade of likeness to the real conception of the painter at all—not a shade; because, do you know, between that photograph and the original Sistine Madonna, there were at least twelve, perhaps twenty pictures, copies from copies, copied yet again and again—and only, the first of the twelve or twenty artists who had painted them all, had ever seen the Sistine Madonna, or caught the faintest glimpse of the inspiration of Raphael's mind. Well, has it not been so with the great Art, taught first at the Appii Forum to Rome? None have studied from the original here; it has been copy from copy, again and again, until the real inspiration of the first great Art-Master is gone. A sort of outline, a kind of likeness in the mere outward form; but of reality, of resemblance to the Perfect Ideal, nothing remaining, almost nothing at all!"

“And yet, like all analogies,” he persisted, “yours can be pushed to its own contradiction. For in a world which has failed to receive any impression even of the outward form, are not these of St. Francis and St. Dominico the nearest we can reach, and the best representations we can find of the Ideal Perfection which is your Model in your Art of Life? They represent perfection; they resemble their Model in all details; they *imitate*, and so hold forth the result of close imitation of the personal Ideal; and the outcome is, I persist, unsatisfactory in application to the general requirements, to be rejected practically by the many. The failure—I say it with reverence—seems to be less with them than in that unpractical extreme to which the Ideal for their imitation pointed and carried them. That,” he added, “has been the chief ground of rejection with me.”

She looked away from him again, as he ceased to speak, and seemed to gather her force within herself again, as she thought a moment and paused. Then she went on, still

in the low, dreamy tone in which she always seemed to give forth her inner life,—

“ I still see my dream-picture of the great Studio for the Art of Life,” she said. “ I see the Model, lived out and accomplished ; the Master stands by it, and points to His finished work. It is the study of all, the Model for all ; the presentation of absolute Perfection, from which all the students that encircle him draw their knowledge and their laws of life, of the art He teaches, of the power which He inspires, and with which all those eagerly studying round Him become imbued. He says, ‘ Study from the original direct, never from copies—and still less never from copies copied, from defective copies again.’ And so the students catch the very spirit ; so there is poured into their souls the very essence of His power of life. But, the Master is not equally satisfied with all. Some fail to apprehend Him in the subtle high meaning of His instructing words ; some copy slavishly, listen little, think hardly at all, and just imitate—there is an outlined

reflex in their achievement of what He has done; others, and these are they whom He draws nearer and nearer to Him, until they dwell in the inner circle of His students, and catch the impress of His language and the expression of His Celestial Face,—these others hear, and gaze, and study, and drink in deeper, and daily yet more deep, of the Spirit and fire and genius of His great Art-teaching, and then—suddenly quickened and glowing within themselves from this gift of wondrous life and power and light—they paint, and, lo! pictures are there, new and varied and beautiful; all living and lustrous with the same glory which is Divine Genius, but each presenting, as it leans on each student's easel, a form and outline, an image of perfection that is personal and individual—different each from each; all original, all inspired by the same Spirit, but all drawn, and coloured, and completed, by the power and separate circumstances and individuality that each has in himself. That is the dream-picture of my studio of the Life-Art, with

the great Maestro always and continually there, which I see here at Rome as I wander about among the painters, and which depicts something to my own self which, I think, is lost."

"The Art of Life," he said conclusively, looking with a curious glow of feeling on his face into hers.

"Yes," she added, "the Art which, I fancy, is the one to which all the other arts is meant to draw us really. I explain to myself the meaning of it all in that way, do you?"

"You mean, explain the good of it to yourself."

"Yes, as 'la madre' said, 'the good of it.' I like to be able to explain to myself a little, from that one point of view, you know, what art, as well as all else, may mean. I like things to mean a great deal to me; more than just the outer reasons, that are given in a general way as—what people call 'the good of it.'"

"You like to make pictures of it all for yourself. Well, so I do, in my own line, you

know; and I like to see thought in a lily, sometimes, even carved upon a stone—unfading flowers of hieroglyphics, that have given food for wonder to generations of men.”

“Unfading flowers, yes, indeed; which ours are not! Look, all this time we have been talking, we have forgotten that our poor lilies are not of stone. And there is my mother; well, I should not be surprised if I were never allowed to come out alone to buy my flowers again, for she must be consumed with impatience.”

And, *en effet*, Lady Daring was as nearly what the Romans call “*furibonda*” as it was possible to her radiant nature to be. She was quite irate, especially, as she said, she had waved her handkerchief many times from the balcony, while these two, regardless of her impatience and of their fading flowers, had been “mooning in the sunshine,” as she expressed, by the sparkling boat-fountain there.

Adrian, to propitiate her, held out a great sweet bunch of narcissus, as she approached.

"How delicious!" she said, as she took them from him, and buried her face in their depths. "And what a shame to keep these lovely things grilling in the heat out here! I really am very cross; it is too bad of both of you."

"Oh, it is so pleasant and bright and gay, *madre mia*, out here this morning," pleaded Car. "I am so glad you have come out."

"Oh, are you? Well then, my love, I shall be doubly glad if you will come in. It is much too hot for you; besides, there are all these empty vases gaping and desolate, and just been filled by Ramree in the *salon*, and here are your flowers longing for water all this while—and besides, now it is quite near luncheon-time, and afterwards there is so much to do. And there is your father coming back from his morning's sketching, and he is an example to you, Adrian; you have been idling away your time with this mooning girl in the Piazza here, and what has become of all your obelisks, I should like to know?"

“Standing,” he answered, smiling at her, “where Augustus or Hadrian or Trajan may have placed them, in *statu quo* for me.”

“For all you care, indeed! Well, I am really amazed! Who would have thought that the *dolce far niente* would have taken possession of you so soon? It comes over everybody except Frederick—do look at him now.”

And they all turned to meet Sir Frederick, who came round the corner from the Via Condotti, and crossed the Piazza, to reach them. He certainly looked the picture of coolness in his thin, light-coloured sketching-suit—and of energy indomitable, as he came actively forward, with his portfolio under his arm.

“No repose to-day with you, Sir Frederick, that can be easily seen,” said Adrian, as the other nodded his morning greeting, with a pleasant smile.

“The repose I like best, variety of industry,” he answered. “But you also seem to have been well worked by my ladies, at all

events; market-gardening is evidently no light pursuit."

"I am only the gardener's carrier," said Adrian, looking down on the fragrant burden of many radiant hues, which he still carried by Car's side.

"This is Thursday, father," she said presently, "and, you know, it is always our field-day for flowers. But do let us take them in; we must go and dispose of them really now."

"And you will come in and have luncheon, Adrian," Lady Daring said.

"Shall I? May I? How pleasant! What, instead of Mr. Swinford and the Miss Brownriggs at the *table-d'hôte*? You are very good. I should like it immensely. I know Swinford means to finish an harangue on the Titus arch this morning, which he launched upon yesterday afternoon."

At luncheon there was much talk on many things, and the results of Sir Frederick's morning's work was examined, and much

was told to him of yesterday, and much was told by him of his experience with Mr. Calthorpe at the baker's tomb.

"A capital fellow, Calthorpe," he said, "but I will not take him again—no, not when I go sketching, at least—because, you see, Dillon, he is intent on comparative evidences and parallel specimens and inscriptions—like you, you know ; only Greece seems principally his line. And he never sees a light, nor a shadow, nor an outline, nor a fine effect of form, but 'pooh-poohs' it, and goes off at once on the baker and his *panarium* and the insignia of the tombstone and the civic arms—and so we are not at one. He is only an interruption ; I shall not take him again."

"We all have our points of view," said Lady Daring brightly.

"Calthorpe never sees a view from any point," said Sir Frederick curtly ; "but, all the same, he is a very good fellow in his way."

From the baker's tomb they passed on

over much of their pilgrimage of the day before, then on to the events of the evening, and Adrian was told a little of the glories of the reception at the Quirinal.

It was very pretty, they said, and the Queen was gracious and lovely, as always; and the King, "royal, every inch of him," said Sir Frederick; and the jewels of the Roman dames were a wonder, at least to Car, for Lady Daring declared that, so far as the glitter and pomp and brilliancy of all the pageantry of receptions on a grand scale went, India spoiled her for anything European—for the gorgeousness of costume and jewelry to be seen in the east could not be rivalled anywhere on this side Cairo, much less surpassed.

So the conversation ranged over many points, ranged far and near, and a pleasant hour was passed, while small *plats* went round in curious variety, such as custom had taught them at the "tiffin" of the east; and cool fruits were brought in, and curious wines, and then the small coffee-cups

were borne by Ramree in his turban and embroidered kaftan, and Sir Frederick's cigar was laid ready in its place.

"They idled," as Lady Daring said again, using her favourite expression, through the *dolce far niente* of another hot midday hour, in the cool room, softly shaded by sunblinds carefully drawn; they idled, and smoked latakia, and pleasantly talked, while Car, who had spent but two hasty minutes over the most primary *plat* of the pretty repast, stood near them all the while, arranging her flowers, 'too long forgotten,' as she asserted, and filling vase after vase and many quaint-shaped jars also, of curious Italian ware, with her bright, scarlet lilies, her huge bunches of sweet narcissus, and her violets and hyacinths and fresh early roses of spring.

And a charming picture she made for Adrian's eager contemplation, during Lady Daring's *dolce far niente* of the after luncheon hour. As she stood there, against a tall, old *buffet*, in her cool morning dress, with her straw hat still shading her golden-brown

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head, and her hands buried amongst the lily-stems, and the sweet fresh roses, and the green mosses, and maiden hair, with which she encircled and framed in verdure, her bright-coloured flowers.

It was a charming hour for Adrian certainly—but it had scarcely, altogether, the character of the *dolce far niente* for him. For, his heart beat all the time too hotly; and his mind was too keenly awake and too full; and not, too, with the sense of *dolce far niente* by any means, but with the joy, the active, vivid joy, of a new, eager, inward life, that had come to him with a force that was swift and irresistible, and that strongly possessed him now.

“No, no, certainly *not*,” said Lady Daring emphatically, when the suggestion was faintly indicated of Caius Cestius and his pyramid as a pleasant occupation for the afternoon. “My dear little girl, sight-seeing is all very well, but you have seen Caius Cestius and Endymion’s acre, and the

Cor Cordium, and the quotation from the Tempest, under the Aurelian wall, already several times, and Adrian can find his way there very well without our help; not that I should not enjoy being your cicerone, my cousin, of all things, but we threw over the Princess Branacia yesterday for that peregrination of ours, and we cannot possibly do the same by the Duchess de Pantuoli to-day. No, no, dear child, it is the first time she has asked us, and we accepted, so it would be really rude—and, you know, you must remember that you have left the school-room quite a year, you need not spend your time in your lesson-books still, dear.”

“I like them, you see,” said Car with a vivid blush.

She did like them, as she suddenly realized; or, at least, she much liked this return to the association of what had meant lesson-books only a short time ago,—history, poetry, and moralizing on the comparative arts,—and perhaps another branch of study, on which she had quite freshly entered, but

which she had not yet identified, nor separated in her mind from all the rest.

"I do not think," said Adrian quietly, "that you are behaving well to me."

"My dear cousin, how much too bad of you, when we gave up everything to lionize you yesterday, and Car has idled your whole morning away most successfully to-day."

"But Caius Cestius was a promise," he said; "that pyramid will bear testimony to your faithlessness for ever, unvisited by me. I keep my word, you see, hold it sacred as the law of the ancients, 'which changeth not,' and I said, I would go to the acre of Adonais and to Caius Cestius only, when conducted by you."

"Then why did you say so," said Lady Daring captiously, "for it was very foolish."

"'A fair folly, a bright dream, a cherished hope,' in English, one other pleasant afternoon. I cling to the promise of all, the folly, and the hopes, and the dreams."

"And you—a philosopher?"

"No, only a hieroglyphist," he said, "an

Egyptologist—that is what they call me in the society's lecture list."

"At all events, something I thought quite superior to follies, hopes, or dreams," Lady Daring went on—smiling brightly at him, as she lingered by Car at the oak *buffet*, and paused to help her, putting in here and there a flower.

She liked to see Adrian brighten so quickly, and to a mood so soft and gay, in their company and in her house. It made her happier about him, when she thought of all the past; and, indeed, he recalled to her more and more, as these days went swiftly on, the Adrian he had been, as she had once known him, before he had ever thought much of Egyptology, and when he was still bright and *insouciant*, and so young.

He looked young now again, she fancied, so much younger than when they first discovered him three days ago, and it pleased her. It softened her decision now.

"Well, I will tell you what we might do," she said; "we might make a compromise. I

have promised to drive Mrs. Calthorpe to the duchessa's; she has also a card, and now that Frederick will absolutely *not* have her husband's society while he finishes off the baker, poor Adela will be puzzled what to do. She never deserts her Philip, nor leaves him to a dull afternoon, and Frederick, you see, is obdurate. So now, Adrian, 'we are there!' You go and fetch Philip Calthorpe; I know exactly where you will find him, Mr. Swinford has button-holed him after the *table-d'hôte*, and he is there, pinned in the passage window at this moment, and I feel convinced that unless you interrupt them they will not have decided if the scroll on the crest of the Trajan Column is Greek or Etruscan,—or neither,—by dinner-time. So you go, get possession of Mr. Calthorpe—beg Adela to be ready for us at three, we will call for her, and you conduct Philip, by gentle means or violence, until you have brought him to gravitate to the gate of the Acre of Keats, under the shadow of Caius Cestius, at four o'clock. The Palazzo

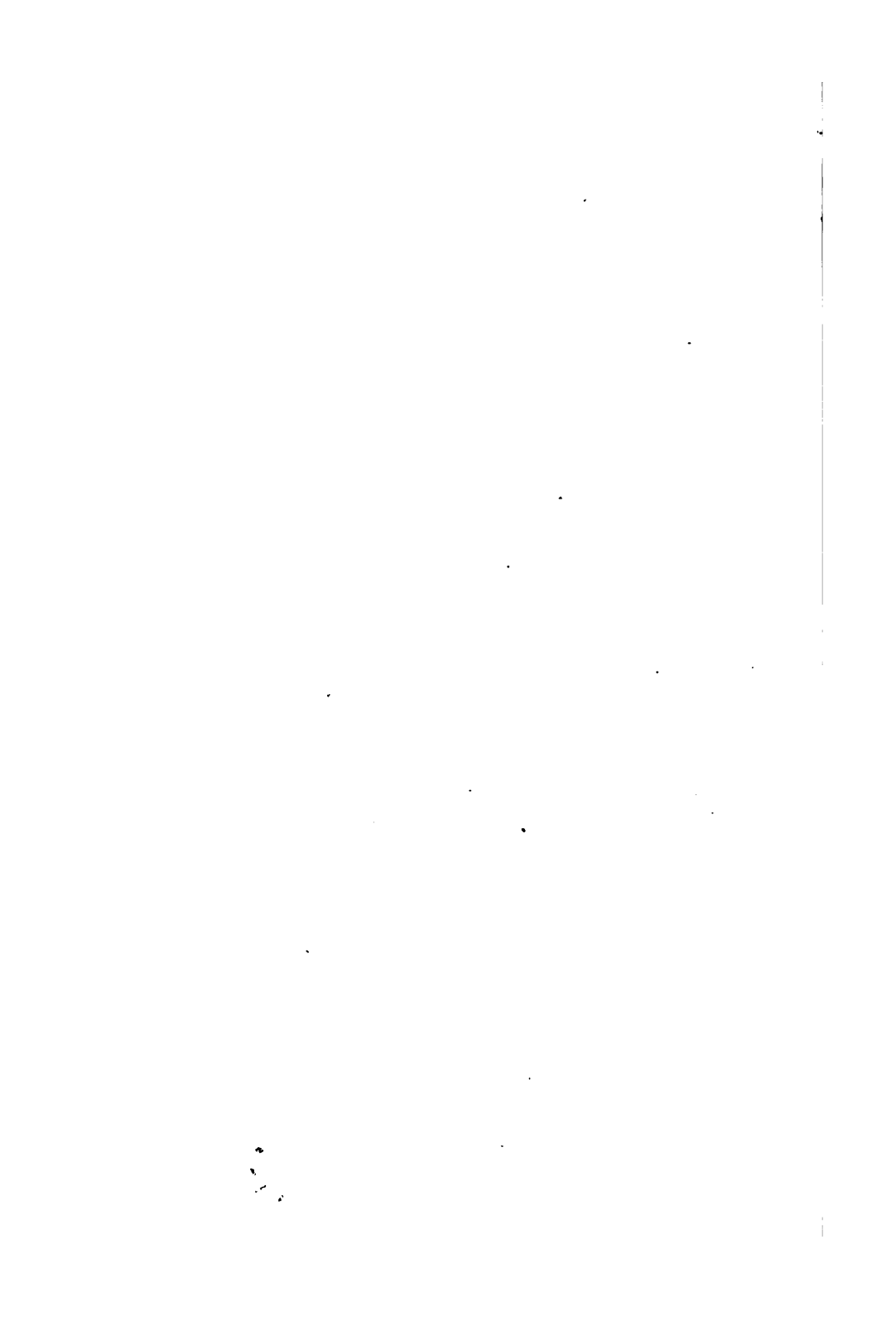
Pantuoli is on the way there, half-an-hour will suffice for the duchessa, so—we give you tryst !”

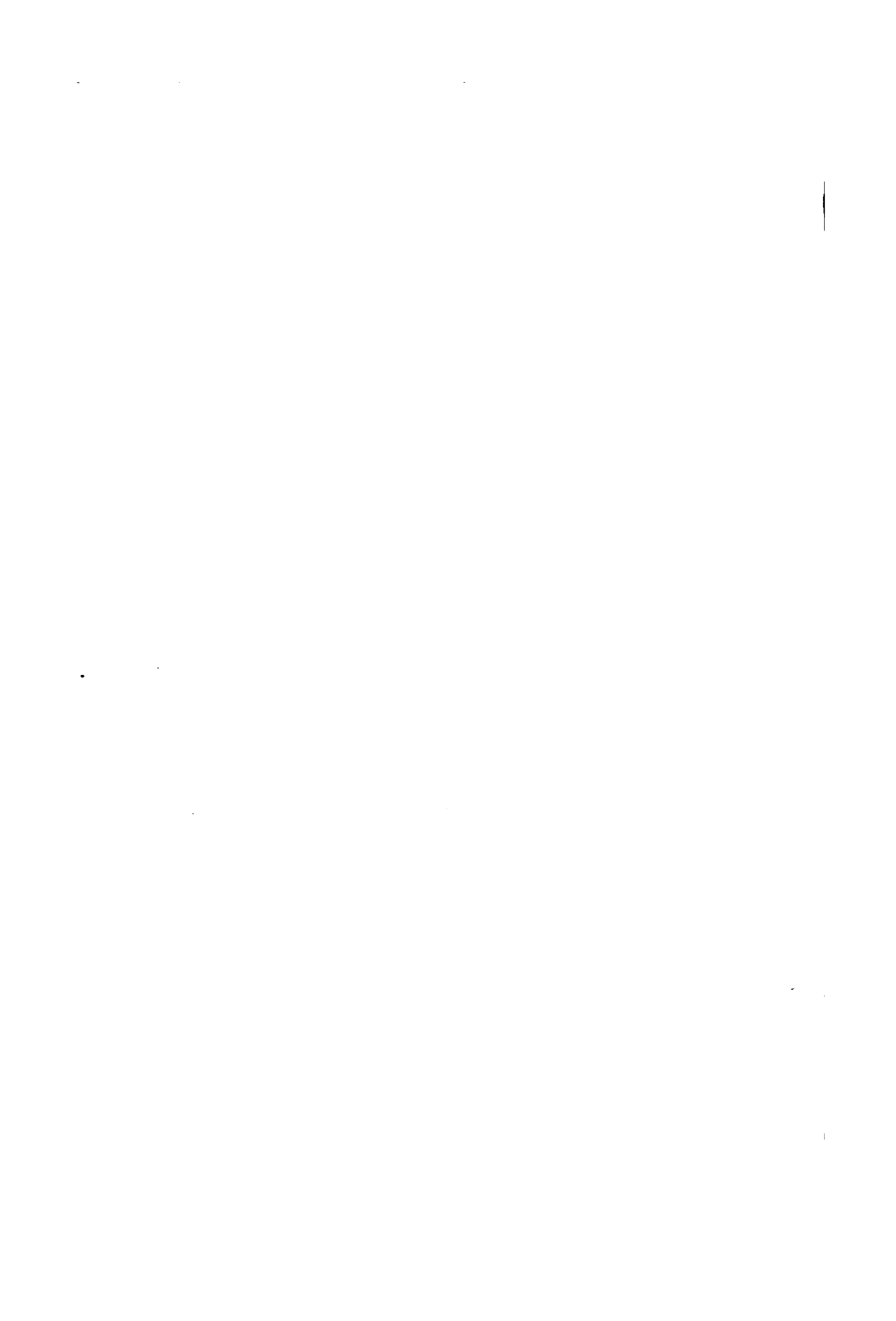
“I will be faithful,” he said ; “ can I really confide in you ?”

“ Be there and see,” she answered, laughing again at his seriously anxious air, as she turned to leave the room, “ be there at four, and then, you know, ‘ *tout vient à ceux qui attendent.*’ Car, my dear love, we shall be late ; you must come and dress, for, as you know, we must call at Signora Pezzi’s and Mrs. Lee-Pratt and Lady Fenshawe’s before we pick up Mrs. Calthorpe for the affair Pantuoli at three. These days ‘ at home ’ of the cosmopolitan Roman lady *à l’heure qu’il est*, or more properly ‘ now-a-days,’ are really and truly, institutions for which life is too short. My love, do come, I beg of you ; no more *dolce far niente*, Adrian, if you please, for the present. We have not one moment to lose.”

END OF VOL. I.

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